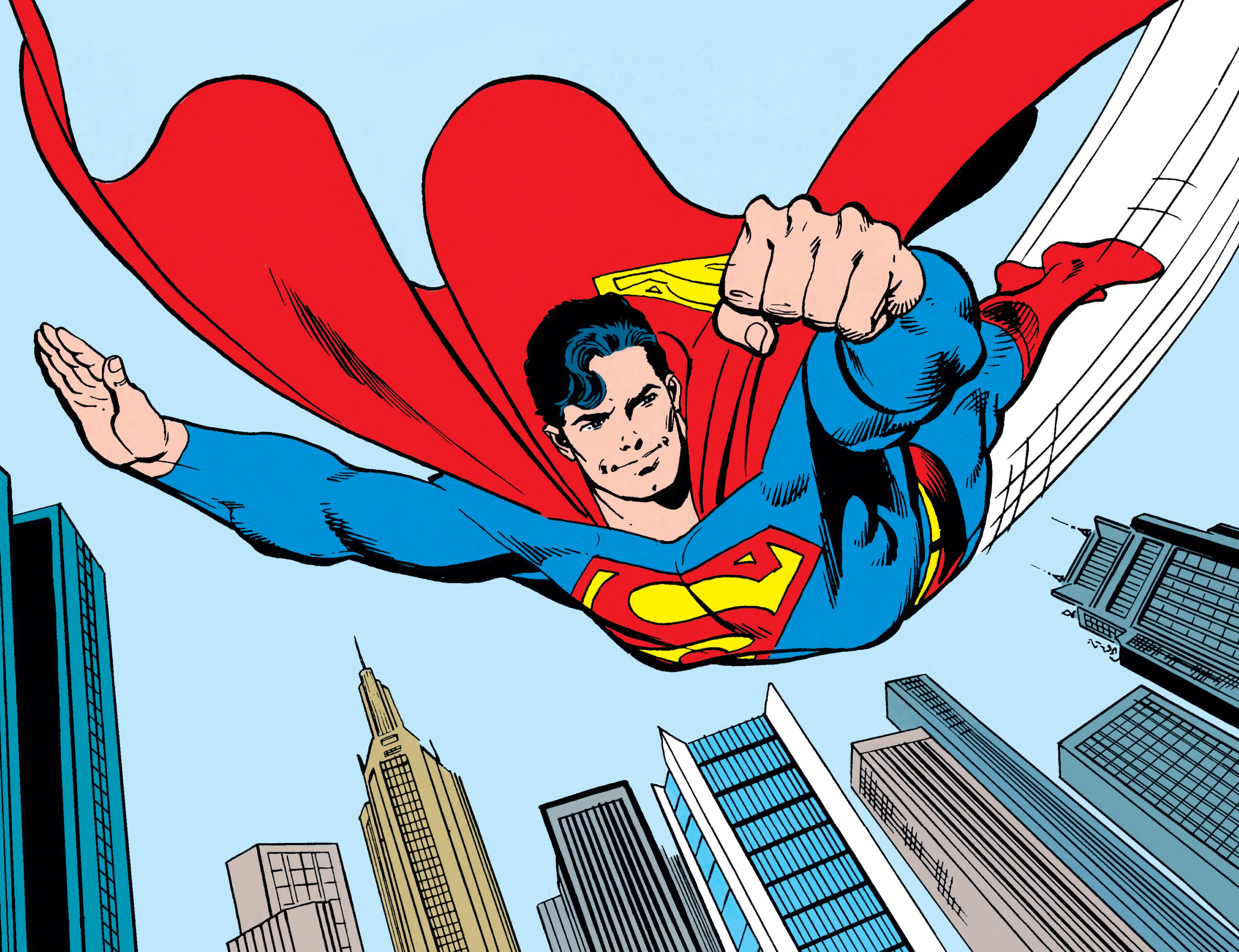
SUPERMAN™

THE MAN OF STEEL™

VOL. 1

JOHN BYRNE • MARV WOLFMAN • JERRY ORDWAY • DICK GIORDANO



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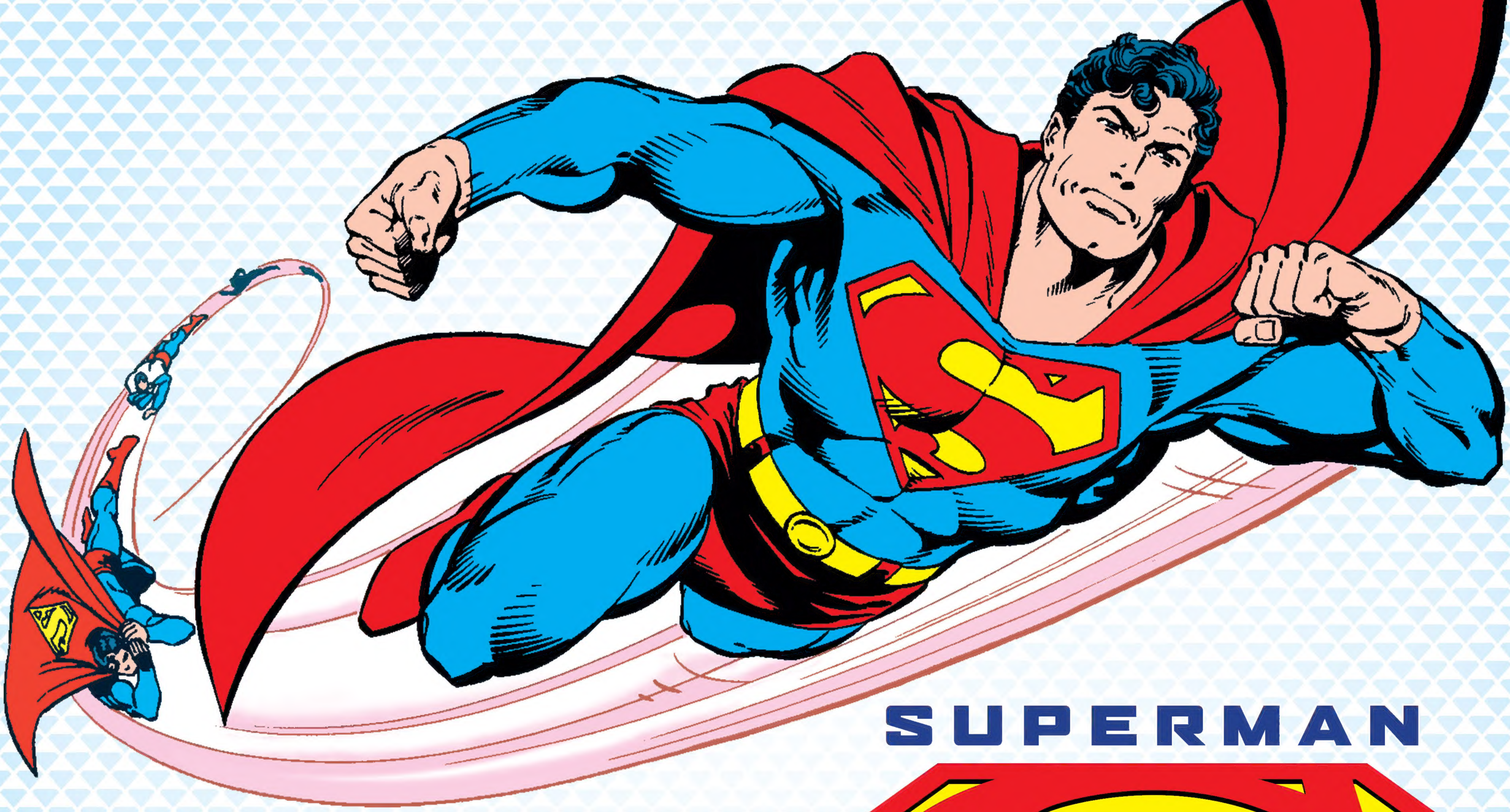

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DEDICATION

The new Superman has many fathers and mothers. He was born out of a 50-year gestation period. Elements of his personality came from almost every interpretation of the character ever seen. To properly acknowledge everyone who contributed to that legacy would take a volume in itself. Here, in democratic alphabetical order, is a list of some of those whose works and words influenced my part in this second genesis.

—John Byrne

Neal Adams
Murphy Anderson
Otto Binder
Wayne Boring
Andrea Braun
Michael Carlin
Phyllis Coates
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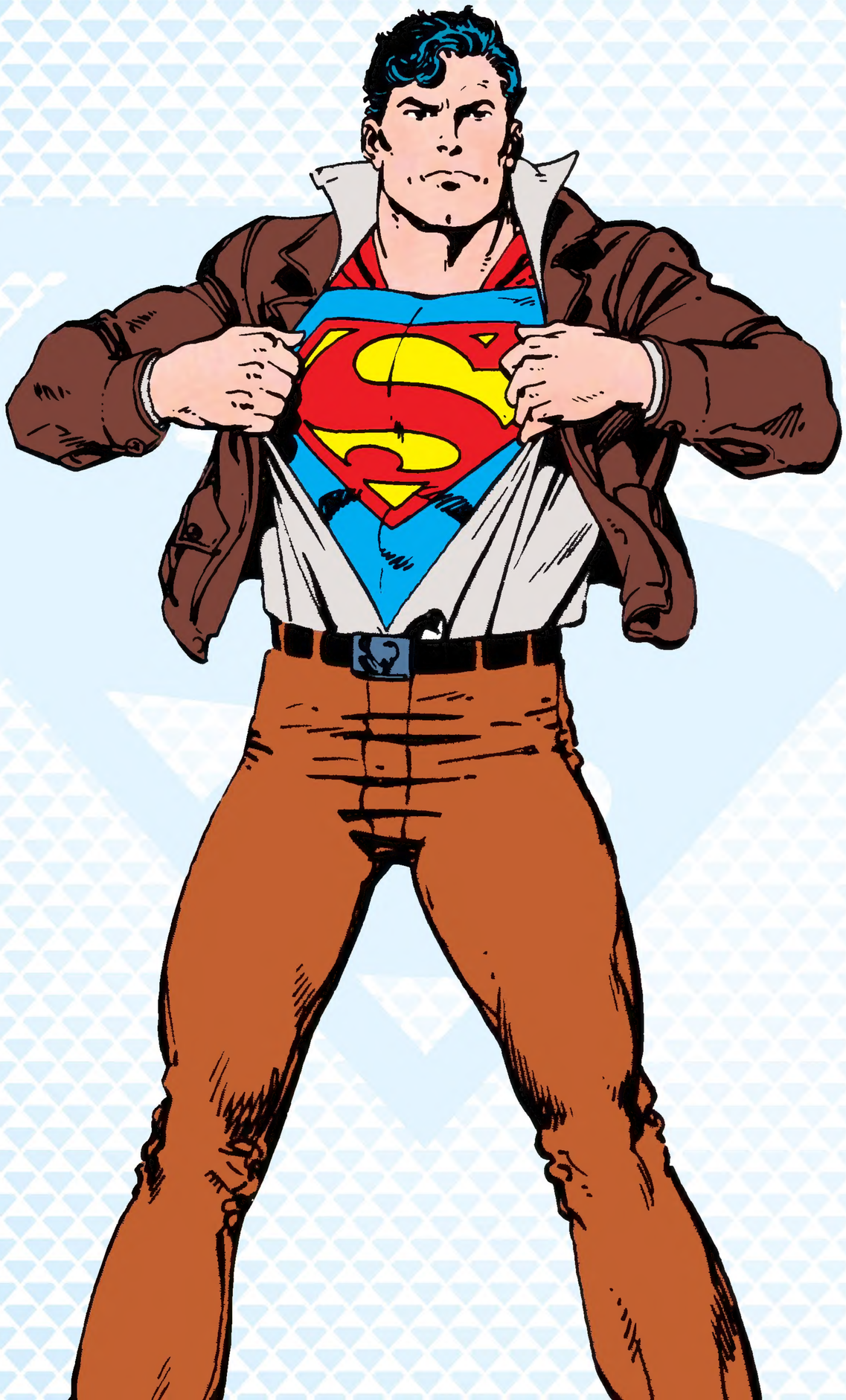


SUPERMAN: A PERSONAL VIEW

by JOHN BYRNE

Superman began as a television series starring George Reeves. It was first aired around 1953, and the second episode was "The Haunted Lighthouse." Then the character turned up in hardcover black-and-white annuals featuring several Superman adventures, along with such luminaries as Rex the Wonder Dog. Later, as Superboy, he appeared in a three-story one-shot that also featured Johnny Quick and Batman and Robin.

Does this sound wrong to you?

Maybe you've heard that Superman was created in the mid-1930s by Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster. That he first appeared in *Action Comics* #1, cover-dated June 1938. That he went on to claim his own title a few months later, and over the subsequent years appeared in dozens of different titles, including *Adventure Comics*, *World's Finest Comics*, and *Justice League of America.* This in addition to a couple of successful movie serials starring Kirk Alyn, and some simply spectacular animated outings from the Fleischer Studios. Most of the above long before George Reeves first put on the cape.

Well, that's all very true, too. But that's not how I first encountered the Man of Steel, and that's what I'm here to talk about today. Superman. My personal view of a legend.

I was something on the order of seven years old when I first saw Superman. My family was still in England, where I was born and spent most of the first eight years of my life. We lived upstairs in my maternal grandparents' house, in the town of West Bromwich, Staffordshire. My father had a pretty good job as a planner with the Midlands Electricity Board, and things were not exactly tight, but television was still something of a luxury. We had a tiny little black-and-white set in one corner of our living room. Can any of our modern readers conceive of a time when black-and-white was the only option? It was a window into another world.

Most of the programs were British, of course. At least the ones I watched and loved: *Muffin the Mule*. Bill and Ben from *Flower Pot Men*. *Willy McBean and his Magic Machine*. Sooty and Sweep from *Sooty*. Kiddie shows. Then there were the more grown-up adventure programs. *Ivanhoe* with a very pre-James Bond Roger Moore, *Sir Lancelot*, with William Russell in the lead. He went on to another kind of fame, as one of the first assistants to the mysterious Doctor Who. *The Adventures of Robin Hood*, with Richard Greene.

Then there were the American imports. And the ones I remember were very different from the British shows that surrounded them. *I Married Joan*. *I Love Lucy*. *Dragnet*. *Jungle Jim*. And one day, *Adventures of Superman*.

It didn't exactly leap off the page when I read the listing in *TVTimes*. I recognized it as a show I hadn't heard of, and asked my parents what it might be. They seemed not to know either, though I now suspect their reticence in discussing the subject probably had to do with the subject matter suggested by that "Haunted Lighthouse" title. I was what is sometimes known as a "sensitive child." The hyperactive imagination that led me eventually to seek out a career in comics used to give me some world-class nightmares when I was a wee lad. There had been an episode of *Jungle Jim* that featured a fake haunting in the jungle. Nothing more innovative than draping a sheet over a basketball and hanging it from a tree. But that scared the willies out of me.

So, naturally, my parents did what they could to deflect my interest in this new show. Thus I never did see Superman in "The Haunted Lighthouse." Not until I was 34, and I caught it in syndicated reruns one Saturday morning. But I saw the next episode. And not a week later I saw one of those black-and-white hardcover "annuals" in a local shop. That was how I first discovered the color of Superman's costume. The front cover was a full-color painting of a scene from one of the interior stories. Superman fighting a sea serpent, as I recall.

Curiously, although I had learned to read by then, and had no trouble with the captions and speech balloons, it was nearly a year after I first started reading those stories before I realized the emblem on Superman's chest was a stylized "S." Largely because of this, to this day, I still render the emblem by drawing the "negative spaces," the yellow shapes, as independent forms. I used to see them as two funny-looking fish, swimming past each other. That's still what I draw.

That was the beginning, then. The beginning of a fascination with comic books in general, and Superman in particular, that has persisted more or less consistently to

the present day. I grew up reading comics. Probably I was not a steady consumer for more than six or seven years, but that amounted to a good third of my life at that time. Comic books were a very important part of the shaping of my imagination, and DC comics in particular.

Imagine, then, my overwhelming jubilation when my family moved to Canada in 1958, and for the first time I was exposed to the full range of American comic books. *Superman. Action Comics. Adventure Comics. Batman. Detective Comics. World's Finest Comics. Superman's Girl Friend, Lois Lane. Superman's Pal, Jimmy Olsen.* And later, *The Flash, Green Lantern, Justice League of America, Hawkman, The Atom,* and *Metal Men.*

Most of them contained two and sometimes three stories per issue. Six- and seven-page yarns that somehow, for my eight-plus-year-old mind, contained all the thrills and wonder of the multipart sagas that fill modern comics (not a few of which I myself have been responsible for!). Superman was threatened by some master plan of the villainous Lex Luthor a minimum of once per issue. Aliens landed on Earth with clockwork regularity. Red Kryptonite would send out its mutated radiation to cause Superman to grow to giant size, or shrink, or get super-fat, or super-stupid, or super-ugly.

The Super-Family began to grow. There was already Krypto, the Superdog. Now came Kara, Superman's cousin, who called herself Supergirl. She won her own series, and gave the world Streaky the Super-cat and Comet the super-horse. Beppo the super-monkey. Titano the super-ape, with his lethal Kryptonite vision.

And the villains! Only the Batman (or possibly Dick Tracy) could lay claim to a more bizarre rogues gallery. Metallo, the man with the Kryptonite heart. The Prankster. The Toyman. The Thing from 40,000 A.D.! Brainiac. Bizarro. Mr. Mxyzptlk. And, of course, the mad Luthor, scientist gone wrong.

Then there were the ladies. For a guy with no regular, ongoing romance, Superman had a lot of beautiful women in his life. Lois, of course. Lana Lang, originally Superboy's girlfriend, later Lois's rival for the affections of the adult Man of Steel. Lori Lemaris, always my favorite, separated forever from Superman by the boundary of *species*! And trips through the Time Barrier even allowed Superman to get involved, briefly, with the likes of Cleopatra and Helen of Troy.

The stories were always simple, and by today's standards, simple-minded. I remember a Lori Lemaris story in which Superman was carrying the wounded Lori (a *mermaid*, by the way) back to Atlantis. Suddenly, up swam a gigantic dragon, which zapped Superman with radioactive vision and promptly swam away. Today, we'd get at least three issues' worth of story out of that dragon. Where it came from. How it got there. Why it was attacking Superman. Back then it was not only incidental, not even part of the whole story, but it rated about *three panels*. And you know something, I wasn't the least disturbed by that.

I was also about 10 years old, and they do say 10-year-olds are more sophisticated nowadays. They probably are.

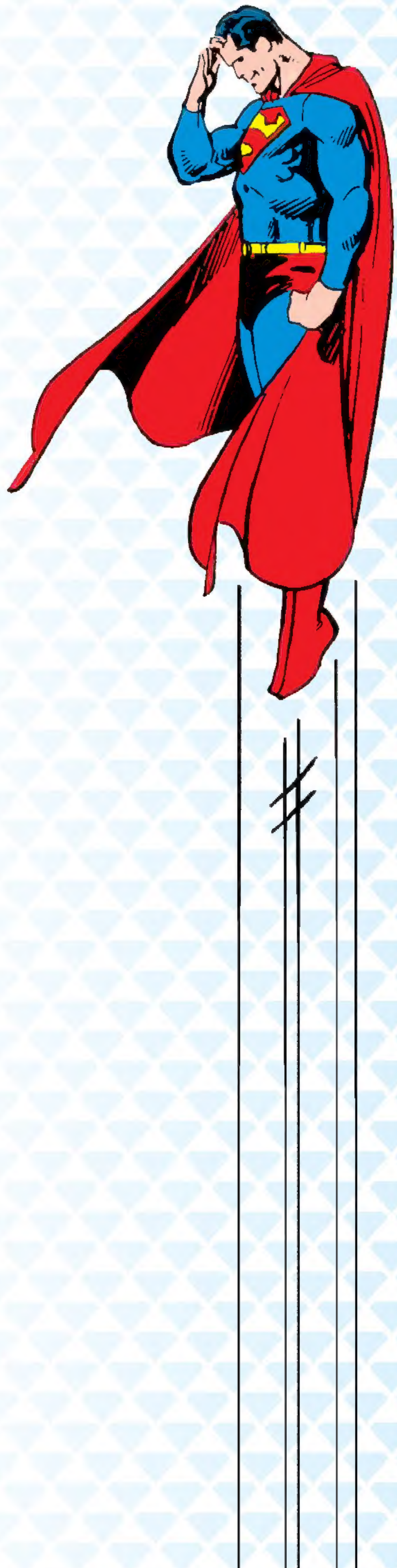
But I sure did have a lot of fun reading those old stories. And even today, when I pull out my dog-eared collection, some of those tales can still bring a nostalgic tear to my eye.

Now, nearly 30 years after I saw that listing for a new television program, DC Comics has hired me to guide the reshaping of the Superman legend. To try to pare away some of the barnacles that have attached themselves to the company's flagship title. To try to make the Superman of today as exciting in his own right as was that primal Superman of yesterday. To try to re-create Superman as a character more in tune with the needs of the modern comic book audience. A much *smaller* audience than when I was 10 years old. But a much more demanding one, too.

I hope you'll stay with us as Superman sets forth into the '80s, the '90s, and with any kind of luck, on into the 21st century. And who knows, maybe in 30 years or so someone will sit down at a word processor and write about how Superman began with a miniseries called *The Man of Steel*, which was an introduction to a world of wonder and a fascination that lasted a lifetime.

Maybe that someone will be *you*!

JOHN BYRNE
1991



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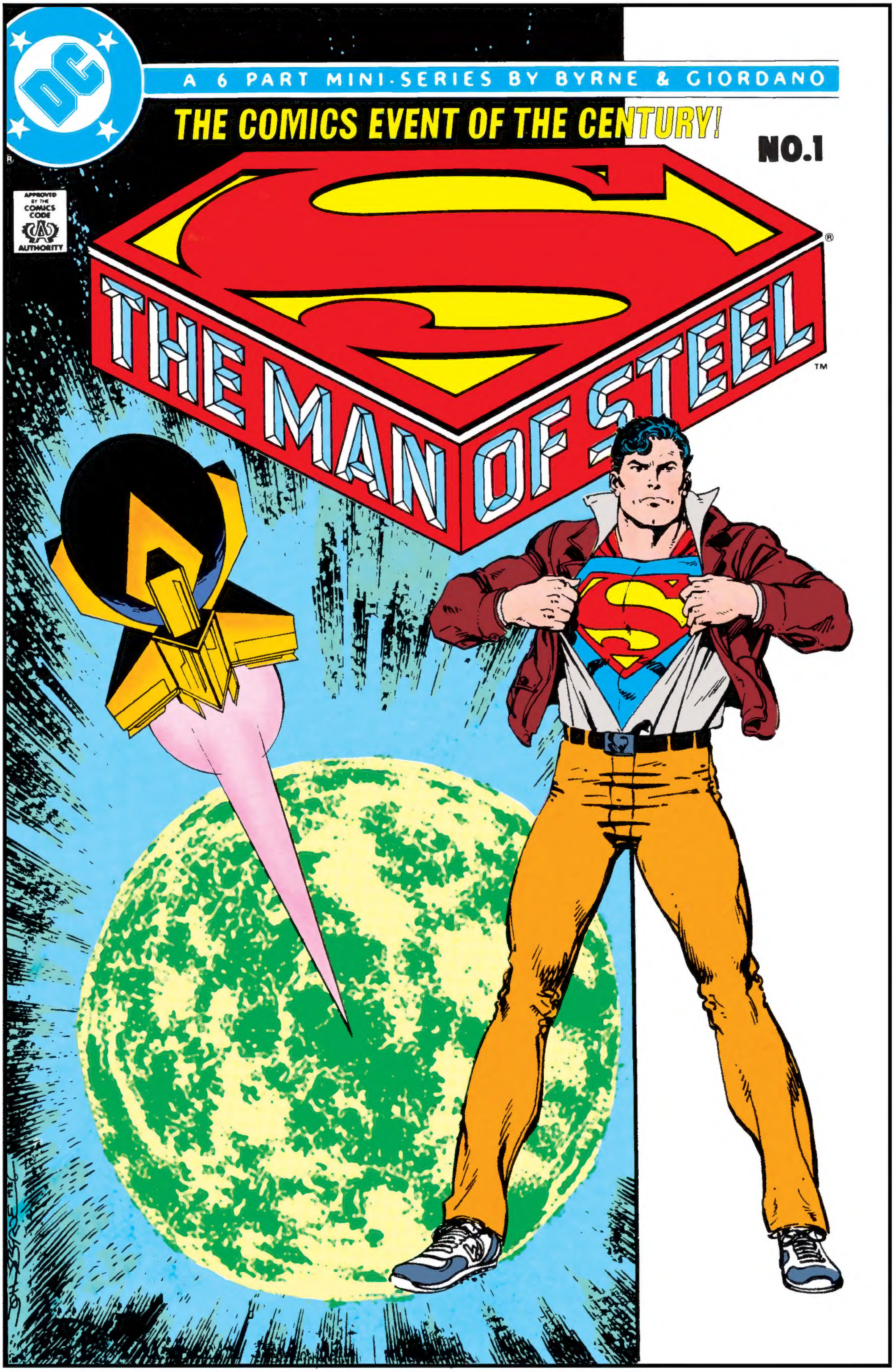
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THE COMICS EVENT OF THE CENTURY!
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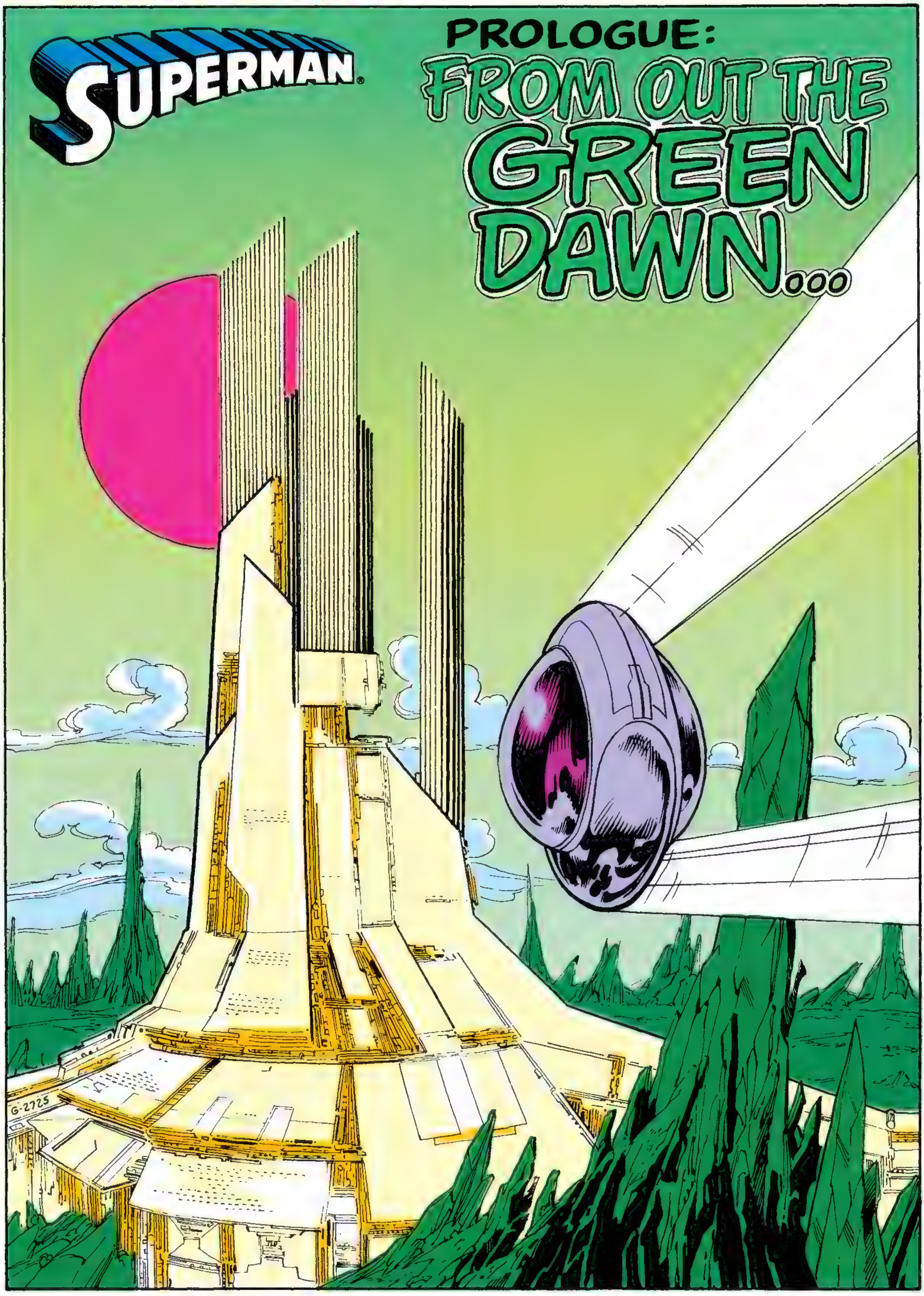
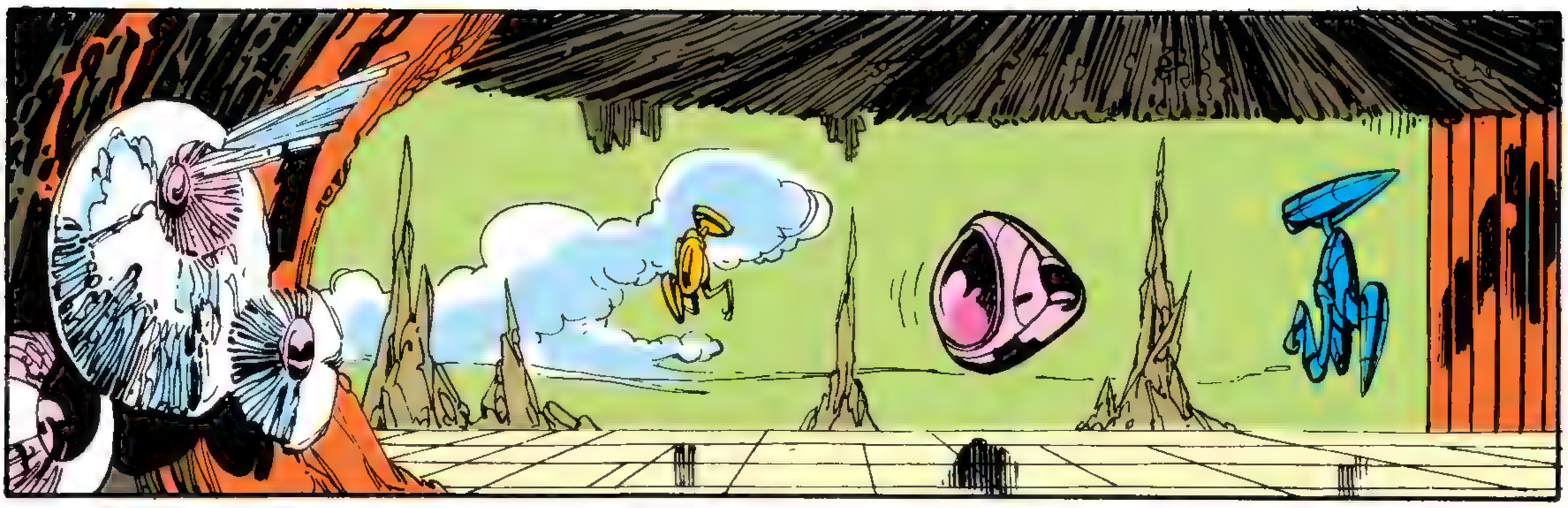
BOOK ONE

SUPERMAN®

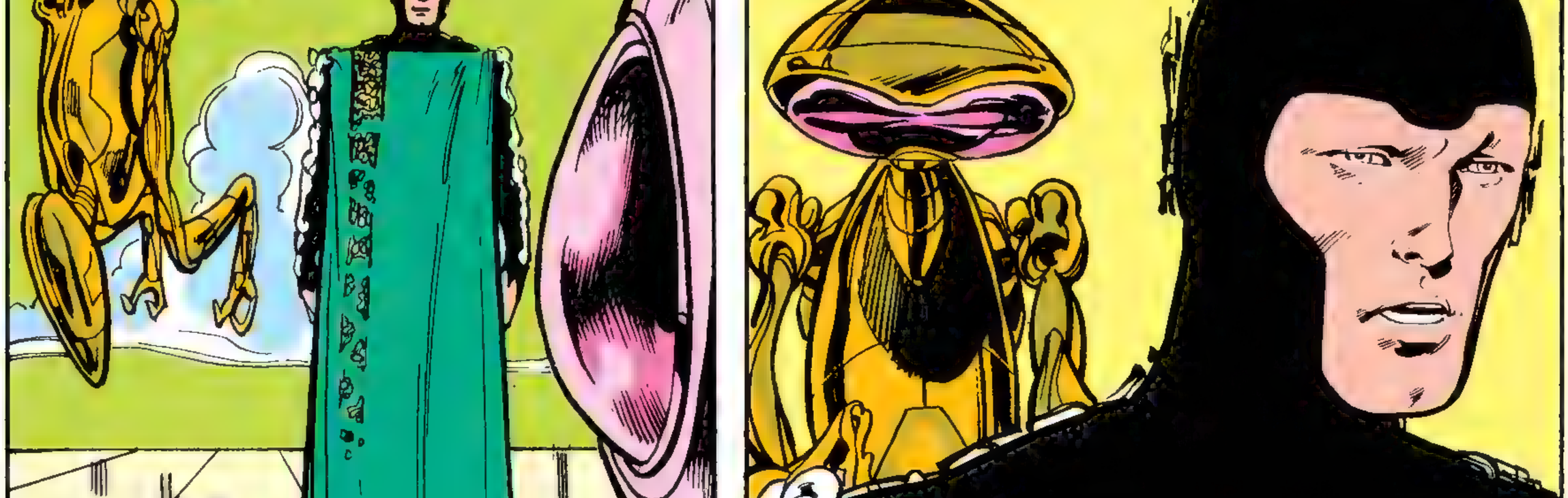
PROLOGUE: FROM OUT THE GREEN DAWN...





WELCOME HOME, MY LORD. I TRUST YOUR JOURNEY WAS A SUCCESSFUL ONE?
IT WAS, AND IT WAS NOT, KELEX. I HAVE LEARNED WHAT THERE IS TO LEARN. I ONLY WISH I HAD NOT.
WHERE IS THE CHILD?

FOLLOWING YOUR EARLIER INSTRUCTIONS, I HAVE PLACED THE MATRIX IN THE THIRD LEVEL LABORATORY, SIRE.
GOOD. I WILL GO STRAIGHT THERE.
IF...WHEN THE LADY LARA CALLS, PLEASE GUIDE HER TO ME.


THE MASTER IS DEEPLY TROUBLED, KELEX. YOU HAVE SERVED HIM ALL HIS LIFE, MUCH LONGER THAN I. HAVE YOU DEDUCED THE ORIGIN OF HIS DISTRESS?
EVERYONE ON KRYPTON SEEMS DISTRESSED, KELOR.
BUT IT IS BEYOND THE RANGE OF MY PROGRAMMING TO COMPREHEND THE CAUSE.

MY...

...SON...

JOR-EL!!

THEN IT IS *TRUE!* WHEN I HEARD... WHEN I WAS TOLD, I COULD NOT BELIEVE IT!

BUT YOU REALLY DID IT! YOU REALLY SENT ONE OF YOUR SERVANTS TO REMOVE THE MATRIX FROM THE *GESTATION CHAMBERS!*

I DID. AM I NOT ENTITLED TO DO SO IF I WISH, LARA? I AM THE CHILD'S FATHER. BY KRYPTONIAN LAW I HAVE THE *RIGHT* TO REMOVE HIM.

YOU SPEAK OF A LAW THAT HAS NOT BEEN INVOKED FOR *CENTURIES*, JOR-EL.

WHY DO YOU INVOKE IT NOW? HAS THE TRAGEDY THAT BESETS OUR WORLD ROBBED YOU OF YOUR *SANITY?* IS THIS WHY YOU ENDANGER THE LIFE OF OUR UNBORN CHILD?

"ENDANGER"? WHAT I MEAN TO DO WILL NOT ENDANGER HIM, LARA. HE WILL *SURVIVE*. LONG AFTER ALL OF KRYPTON IS A SHATTERED *RUIN*, OUR SON WILL SURVIVE.

WH-WHAT?

EVEN NOW OUR GREATEST PHYSICIANS SEEK A *CURE* FOR THE PLAGUE WHICH IS DESTROYING US. WITHIN DAYS...

... KRYPTON WILL BE NO MORE. I, TOO, HAVE BEEN SEEKING THE ANSWER, THE TERRIBLE SECRET BEHIND THIS *GREEN DEATH* WHICH HAS ALREADY CLAIMED UNCOUNTED *MILLIONS* OF US, LARA.

NOT ONE HOUR AGO I RETURNED FROM A JOURNEY THAT HAD TAKEN ME ALL ACROSS THE FACE OF OUR WORLD, AND I HAVE DISCOVERED THE *CAUSE* OF OUR CALAMITY.

A *CHAIN-REACTION* WITHIN THE CORE OF KRYPTON HAS CAUSED VAST PRESSURES TO BUILD WITHIN THE PLANET'S CRUST. THOSE UNNATURAL PRESSURES ARE *FUSING* THE NATIVE ELEMENTS INTO A *NEW METAL*. A *RADIO-ACTIVE* METAL.

IT IS THAT RADIATION THAT IS *KILLING* US ALL, LARA.

AND AS IF THAT WERE NOT ENOUGH...

THAT SAME PRESSURE, AS IT BUILDS AND BUILDS WITHIN OUR WORLD, WILL SOON BE *TOO MUCH* FOR THE ROCKY MANTLE TO CONTAIN.

WITHIN A DAY, PERHAPS WITHIN AS LITTLE AS AN *HOUR*, KRYPTON WILL *EXPLODE!!*

N-NO!!

THAT CANNOT BE! WE HAVE BEEN *ABSOLUTE MASTERS* OF THIS WORLD FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS! IT DOES NOT *RAIN*, BUT THAT WE PERMIT IT! NOW YOU SAY THE WORLD WILL DESTROY US??

PERHAPS IT IS *FITTING*, LARA.

AS YOU SAY, WE CONTROL THE PLANET. WE HAVE FILLED EVERY NOOK AND CRANNY, CONQUERED AND HARNESSED EVERY FORCE OF NATURE...

AND IN THE END, WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED? *STERILITY*. A COLD AND HEARTLESS SOCIETY, STRIPPED OF ALL HUMAN FEELING, ALL HUMAN PASSION AND *LIFE*.

Y-YOU... YOU SPEAK *OBSCENITIES!*

NO, LARA.

I SPEAK OF WHAT *WAS* A HUNDRED THOUSAND YEARS AGO.

I SPEAK OF A *FULLNESS* OF *LIFE* WE HAVE *DENIED* OURSELVES... BUT WHICH I SHALL GIVE BACK TO OUR *SON!*

WHAT DO YOU MEAN? IF KRYPTON IS DOOMED AS YOU SAY, OUR CHILD IS DOOMED ALSO.

NO, LARA. NO.

SEALED WITHIN THE MATRIX ORB, HE HAS BEEN *SHIELDED* FROM THE POISONOUS RADIATION. TRUE, THE ORB COULD NOT SURVIVE THE EXPLOSION OF OUR PLANET...

...BUT IT IS RESILIENT ENOUGH TO SURVIVE A *JOURNEY THROUGH HYPER-SPACE!*

WHAT!?!

COME, SEE FOR YOURSELF WHAT HAS OCCUPIED MY EVERY WAKING HOUR, SINCE FIRST I SUSPECTED THE FATE OF OUR WORLD, MONTHS AGO.

ACROSS THE REACHES OF SPACE I HAVE SEARCHED, AND FOUND AT LAST A DISTANT WORLD, A WORLD NOT UNLIKE KRYPTON OF MILLENNIA PAST.

A WORLD THE NATIVES CALL *EARTH.*

IT LOOKS SO... SO WILD, SO *UNCONTROLLED,* WHAT MANNER OF BEINGS COULD DWELL ON SUCH A WORLD?

SEE FOR YOURSELF, IN A NATION CALLED *AMERICA,* IN A SUB-SECTION CALLED *KANSAS...*

OH-HHHH!!!

LARA... WHAT'S WRONG?

TH-THAT *SAVAGE!*

HE... HE BARES HIS NAKED FLESH... HIS *HAIRY* FLESH... BARES IT TO THE AIR! HE... TOUCHES UNPROCESSED *SOIL!*

OH, JOR-*EL*, WHAT KIND OF *HELL* DO YOU SEEK TO SEND OUR CHILD INTO?

NOT A HELL, LARA. FOR HIM AT LEAST, *MORE OF A HEAVEN.* FOR THE PLANET CALLED EARTH ORBITS A *YELLOW STAR.*

EXPOSED TO THE RADIATION OF THAT STAR, HIS KRYPTONIAN CELLS WILL BECOME LIVING *SOLAR BATTERIES*, MAKING HIM GROW EVER MORE *POWERFUL.*

IN TIME HE WILL BECOME THE *SUPREME BEING* ON THAT PLANET, ALMOST A *GOD!*

THEN... HE WILL *RULE* THEM? HE WILL SHAPE THEM TO PROPER KRYPTONIAN WAYS?

PERHAPS.

BUT, SEE NOW. MY SERVANTS HAVE ALMOST COMPLETED THE ADAPTATION OF THE MATRIX.

THE *HYPER-LIGHT DRIVE* HAS BEEN ATTACHED.

BUT... JOR-*EL*, IS THERE NO TIME FOR RECONSIDERING? IS THERE NO OTHER WAY FOR OUR CHILD TO...

NO, LARA.

THERE IS NO MORE TIME FOR *ANYTHING* AT ALL.

"THE ERUPTIONS HAVE BEGUN!"

OH, NO! OH, NO NO NO!

PER... PERHAPS THIS IS NOT THE END! PERHAPS IT IS ONLY... ONLY...

NO, LARA. DO NOT CLUTCH AT STRAWS. KRYPTON IS *DOOMED.*

ONLY OUR CHILD CAN HOPE TO SAVE THE LEGACY OF ALL THAT WAS ONCE GREAT IN OUR WORLD.

I MUST LAUNCH THE CAPSULE...

NOW!

FAREWELL, MY SON.

FAREWELL!!

AND SO IT MUST END, JOR-EL? IN FIRE, AND PAIN, AND *MADNESS?*

WITHOUT MY EVER KNOWING... THE TOUCH OF MY CHILD'S HAND?

LARA...

WE...WE ARE TOGETHER, AT LEAST, AT THE LAST.

JOR-EL?

FROM THE MOMENT I WAS FIRST SHOWN YOUR HOLO-IMAGE, AND TOLD YOUR SEED AND MINE WOULD BE MINGLED IN THE MATRIX, I HAVE FELT AN UNKNOWN EMOTION STIRRING IN MY HEART.

OUR WORLD HAS NOT HAD A PLACE FOR WHAT I FEEL. NOT IN A HUNDRED CENTURIES.

BUT I HAVE STUDIED WELL THE HABITS OF THE EARTHLINGS, AND I HAVE LEARNED FROM THEM AN UNDER-STANDING OF WHAT I FEEL.

AND EVEN THOUGH WE *DIE*, I AM CONTENT, SO LONG AS WE DIE *TOGETHER...*

"FOR I HAVE ALWAYS LOVED YOU..."

END OF PROLOGUE

SUPERMAN

CHAPTER ONE: THE SECRET

... AND THIS SMALLVILLE CROWD IS GOING ABSOLUTELY WILD AS NUMBER 15 RACES DOWN THE FIELD FOR HIS TENTH TOUCHDOWN!

SMALLVILLE HIGH HAS JUST NEVER SEEN A FOOTBALL PLAYER LIKE THIS AMAZING, ALL-ROUND CHAMPION, YOUNG CLARK KENT!

GO! GO! GO, CLARK, GO!

GO! GO! GO, CLARK, GO!

YAAY!

CLARK!!!

TOUCH-DOWN!!

YEAH! YEAH!

I TELL YA, *KENT*, THAT BOY OF YOURS IS THE *BEST!*

HE'S GONNA MAKE *MILLIONS* AS A *PRO!* *MILLIONS!*

MAYBE, COACH. MAYBE...

BUT I CAN'T HELP NOTICING HIS *TEAMMATES* DON'T SEEM TOO HAPPY.

THEM? THEY'RE JUST *JEALOUS!* THERE'S NEVER *BEEN* A CHAMPION LIKE CLARK AT SMALLVILLE HIGH.

BANG!

WHAT INDEED...

AN' ANYWAY, THE GAME'S *OVER*, AN' HE'S *WON* US ANOTHER ONE!

SO WHAT'S TO WORRY?

YAY CLARK YA-AY CLARK YAY CLARK

OH, CLARKIE, YOU WERE JUST *MAGNIFICENT* AGAIN! THE BEST YET!

I *DO* SEEM TO KEEP GETTING *BETTER AND BETTER*, DON'T I, *LANA*?

PRETTY SOON I SHOULD BE BETTER EVEN THAN--

SON...

SMALLVILLE LOVES CLARK

OH, HI, *PA*! GLAD YOU WERE ABLE TO MAKE IT!

DID YOU SEE THAT LAST TOUCH-DOWN? I WAS...

SON, WE HAVE TO *TALK*.

NOW, CLARK.

LET'S GO.

SURE, PA.

I PROMISED LANA WE'D GO OUT FOR A SODA AFTER THE GAME, BUT I'LL BE HOME AS SOON AS...

ARE...YOU *MAD* AT ME FOR SOMETHING, PA?

NOT *MAD* EXACTLY, CLARK.

A LITTLE *DISAPPOINTED*, MAYBE.

"*DISAPPOINTED*"? BUT... I JUST *WON* THE LAST GAME OF THE SEASON!

AND ALMOST COMPLETELY BY MYSELF!

I *KNOW* THAT, SON.

I KNOW. AND THAT'S WHAT WE NEED TO *TALK* ABOUT.

THAT'S WHY IT'S FINALLY TIME TO *SHOW* YOU SOMETHING.

SOMETHING I MAYBE SHOULD HAVE SHOWN YOU A *LONG* TIME AGO.

WHERE ARE WE GOING, PA?

WE'RE GOING *BACK IN TIME*, SON. IT'S BEEN *EIGHTEEN YEARS* SINCE YOUR MA AND ME LAST CAME TO THIS FIELD.

I'VE LET IT LAY FALLOW EVER SINCE.

THIS... THIS IS THE FIELD YOU TOLD ME NEVER TO *PLAY* IN, WHEN I WAS A LITTLE KID.

THAT'S RIGHT. AND I POSTED "*NO TRESPASSING*" SIGNS ALL 'ROUND, AND PUT UP THE *NASTIEST* BARBED WIRE FENCE I COULD FIND.

ALL TO HIDE *THIS*. LIFT IT AWAY, SON.

YOU SHOULD BE MORE THAN STRONG ENOUGH BY NOW.

BUT, PA, WHAT...?

OMIGOSH!

P-PA...?

WHAT *IS* IT??

IT'S WHERE YOU *CAME* FROM, SON.

IT'S WHERE YOUR MA AN' ME *FOUND* YOU.

"FOUND ME"?!? YOU MEAN... I'M ADOPTED???

SOMETHING LIKE THAT. YES, "ADOPTED" IS AS GOOD A WORD AS ANY.

I SHOULD HAVE TOLD YOU EARLIER. SHOULD HAVE TOLD YOU YEARS AGO.

"IT ALL BEGAN LATE ONE NIGHT. A BIG WINTER STORM WAS BREWIN,' AND YOUR MA AND ME WAS FIXIN' TO CLOSE UP THE HOUSE AGIN IT.

"THEN..."

WHAT IN TARNATION...?

JONATHAN!

"WE DROVE OUT TO THIS FIELD, WHERE THE STREAK HAD SEEMED TO HIT, AND WE FOUND..."

OH... MY...

JONATHAN... WHAT IN THE *WORLD* IS IT??

IT'S SOME KIND OF LITTLE *ROCKET!* A *SPUTNIK*, LIKE THE RUSSIANS...

MARTHA! STAY CLEAR!

BUT...*LOOK*, JONATHAN! THERE'S SOMETHING *INSIDE!* SOMETHING *ALIVE!*

WELL, THEY'S BIN SENDIN' *DOGS* AND *MONKEYS* UP INTO ORBIT. THIS MUST BE...

THAT'S FUNNY... IT'S *COOL* TO THE TOUCH. I READ THEY GET AWFUL *HOT* WHEN...

?!?

IT'S OPENING!!

OH! OHHH, JONATHAN!

IT'S A BABY!!

THOSE... THOSE *MONSTERS*!! THEY PUT A POOR LITTLE BABY INTO A ROCKET-SHIP!

AND THEN THEY SHOT HIM OFF TO THE *MOON* OR SOMEWHERES!! WHAT KIND OF PEOPLE *ARE* THEY??

NOW... YOU BE CAREFUL, MARTHA! WE DON'T *KNOW* THIS BABY CAME FROM *EARTH!* HE COULD BE SOME KIND OF... *MARTIAN*!!

OH, NOW YOU *HUSH*, JONATHAN KENT! YOU'VE BEEN READING TOO MANY OF THOSE *SCIENCE-FICTION MAGAZINES!*

HE'S AS *HUMAN* AS YOU OR ME!

AND I'M GOING TO MAKE SURE THAT WHOEVER THE MONSTERS WERE WHO SHOT HIM UP IN THAT TIN CAN...

...WELL, THEY'RE NEVER GOING TO GET THEIR HANDS ON HIM AGAIN!

MARTHA!

"BUT IT WAS ALREADY TOO LATE. SHE'S A *STUBBORN* WOMAN, YOUR MA, AND SHE'D DECIDED RIGHT AT THE MOMENT SHE FIRST SAW YOU THAT SHE WAS GOING TO KEEP YOU.

"BY THE END OF THE DRIVE HOME, I AGREED.

"AND THAT WAS WHEN MOTHER NATURE HERSELF CLINCHED THE BARGAIN. WE'D NO SOONER PULLED INTO THE YARD THAN THE GRANDFATHER OF ALL BLIZZARDS SLAMMED DOWN.

AND WHEN WE DID, WHY, MARTHA JUST PLAINLY ANNOUNCED OUR NEW FAMILY MEMBER AS OUR OWN NATURAL CHILD. WE'D BEEN TRYING FOR EIGHT YEARS TO HAVE A BABY OF OUR OWN...

"IT WAS THE WORST STORM OF THE CENTURY, AND WE DIDN'T GET BACK INTO SMALLVILLE FOR FIVE MONTHS!

"...AND AFTER TWO MISCARRIAGES AND ONE STILLBIRTH, OUR FRIENDS WERE JUST THRILLED AS COULD BE TO MEET LITTLE CLARK KENT.

"YOU SEEMED IN EVERY WAY TO BE THE BABY WE'D SO OFTEN PRAYED FOR. BEAUTIFUL, BRIGHT... PERFECT.

"AND WHEN IT CAME TIME TO START SCHOOL, YOU FIT RIGHT IN WITH THE OTHERS--ESPECIALLY LITTLE LANA LANG. SEEMED LIKE YOU TWO WERE KINDRED SPIRITS RIGHT FROM GO!"

I LIKE YOU! YOU CAN BE MY BOYFRIEND!

"ALTHOUGH, I GUESS YOU DIDN'T THINK SO AT THE TIME!

"EVERYTHING WENT ALONG JUST FINE, UNTIL THAT DAY WHEN YOU WERE EIGHT, AND YOU DECIDED TO TAKE A SHORT-CUT ACROSS OLD MAN McCULLOGH'S PASTURE.

"I WAS DRIVING BY. I SAW YOU. I ALSO SAW McCULLOGH'S PRIZE BULL.

"BUT THERE WAS NO WAY TO GET TO YOU BEFORE...

"I FELT LIKE I'D SEEN MY OWN LIFE END AT THAT MOMENT, CLARK. I RAN TO WHERE YOU'D FALLEN, FULLY EXPECTING TO FIND YOU ALL CRUSHED AND BLOODY, THE WAY MY BIG BROTHER HARRY HAD LOOKED AFTER HE FELL UNDER MY PA'S THRESHER.

"BUT INSTEAD..."

P-PA...?

CL-CLARK?!!?

YOU'RE...YOU'RE ALL RIGHT??

"THAT WAS THE FIRST SIGN. I DIDN'T TELL YOUR MA ABOUT IT. DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO TELL HER. BUT YOUR SECRET WASN'T ONE THAT COULD BE KEPT FROM HER FOR LONG...

"YOU COULDN'T BE HURT. YOU GOT STRONGER AND STRONGER. ONE DAY YOU EVEN STARTED TO SEE THROUGH WALLS!"

THERE'S YOUR PURSE, MA. ON THE KITCHEN TABLE.

IN... THE NEXT ROOM!!

"THEN CAME THAT DAY, LATE LAST SUMMER. YOU WERE ROMPIN' YOUR WAY HOME WITH OL' RUSTY..."

C'MON, BOY! CATCH ME IF YOU CAN!!

BARK! BARK!

?!?

HOLY COW!!

I CAN FLY!!

BARK! BARK!

I'LL NEVER FORGET HOW YOU CAME *SWOOPING* HOME, HAPPIER, I GUESS, THAN ANYONE IN THE WORLD HAD EVER BEEN.

BUT... WHY ARE YOU TELLING ME ALL THIS, PA? I MEAN, MOST OF IT I *KNOW*.

EXCEPT ABOUT THIS ROCKET-SHIP...

IF THAT'S WHAT IT *IS*. HOW DO WE *KNOW*, PA? HOW *CAN* WE KNOW?

MAYBE WE JUST WEREN'T *MEANT* TO KNOW, SON. MAYBE WE'LL *NEVER* KNOW.

AND MAYBE IT DOESN'T *MATTER*. WHATEVER THIS THING REALLY IS, WHEREVER YOU CAME FROM, YOU'RE *OUR SON* NOW.

YOU'RE AN *AMERICAN CITIZEN*-- AND THAT MEANS YOU'VE GOT *RESPONSIBILITIES!*

I KNOW THAT, PA. BUT I CAN'T HELP..

HELP...

OOHHHHHH

CLARK! CLARK! WHAT IS IT, SON? WHAT'S WRONG?

DON'T... KNOW...

JUST... FEEL SO... *WEAK*... ALL OF A SUDDEN. SO... DIZZY...

COME ON, SON. LET'S GET YOU BACK HOME.

I *SHOULD* HAVE TOLD YOU ALL THIS MORE GENTLY.

NOT EVEN SOMEONE WITH YOUR CONSTITUTION CAN TAKE SO MANY SHOCKS IN ONE DAY!

YOU TOLD HIM?

I TOLD HIM.

HE TOLD ME.

CLARK... HONEY, DON'T *HATE* US FOR KEEPING THIS SECRET FROM YOU ALL THESE YEARS...

I DON'T *HATE* YOU, MA! I COULD *NEVER* THINK BADLY OF YOU OR PA.

HE AND I HAD A LONG TALK ON THE WAY HOME.

HE'S *RIGHT* TO SAY HE'S DISAPPOINTED IN ME. AFTER ALL THE TIMES YOU AND HE HAVE TALKED TO ME OVER THE YEARS, AS EACH NEW *POWER* CAME ALONG...

YOU TOLD ME ALL THOSE TIMES THAT I SHOULD NEVER USE MY SPECIAL ABILITIES TO MAKE MYSELF *BETTER* THAN OTHER PEOPLE -- TO MAKE OTHER PEOPLE FEEL *USELESS*.

BUT THAT'S JUST WHAT I'VE *BEEN* DOING.

AND... IT'S TIME TO *STOP*. IT'S TIME FOR ME TO *FACE* MY RESPONSI-BILITIES.

I HAVE TO LEAVE SMALLVILLE. I HAVE TO SEEK OUT THE PEOPLE AND PLACES THAT *NEED* SOMEBODY WHO CAN DO THE THINGS I CAN DO.

BUT I HAVE TO DO IT IN *SECRET*. THE WORLD MUSTN'T EVER *KNOW* IT'S ME. IT MUST ALWAYS SEEM LIKE GOOD LUCK, OR NATURE.

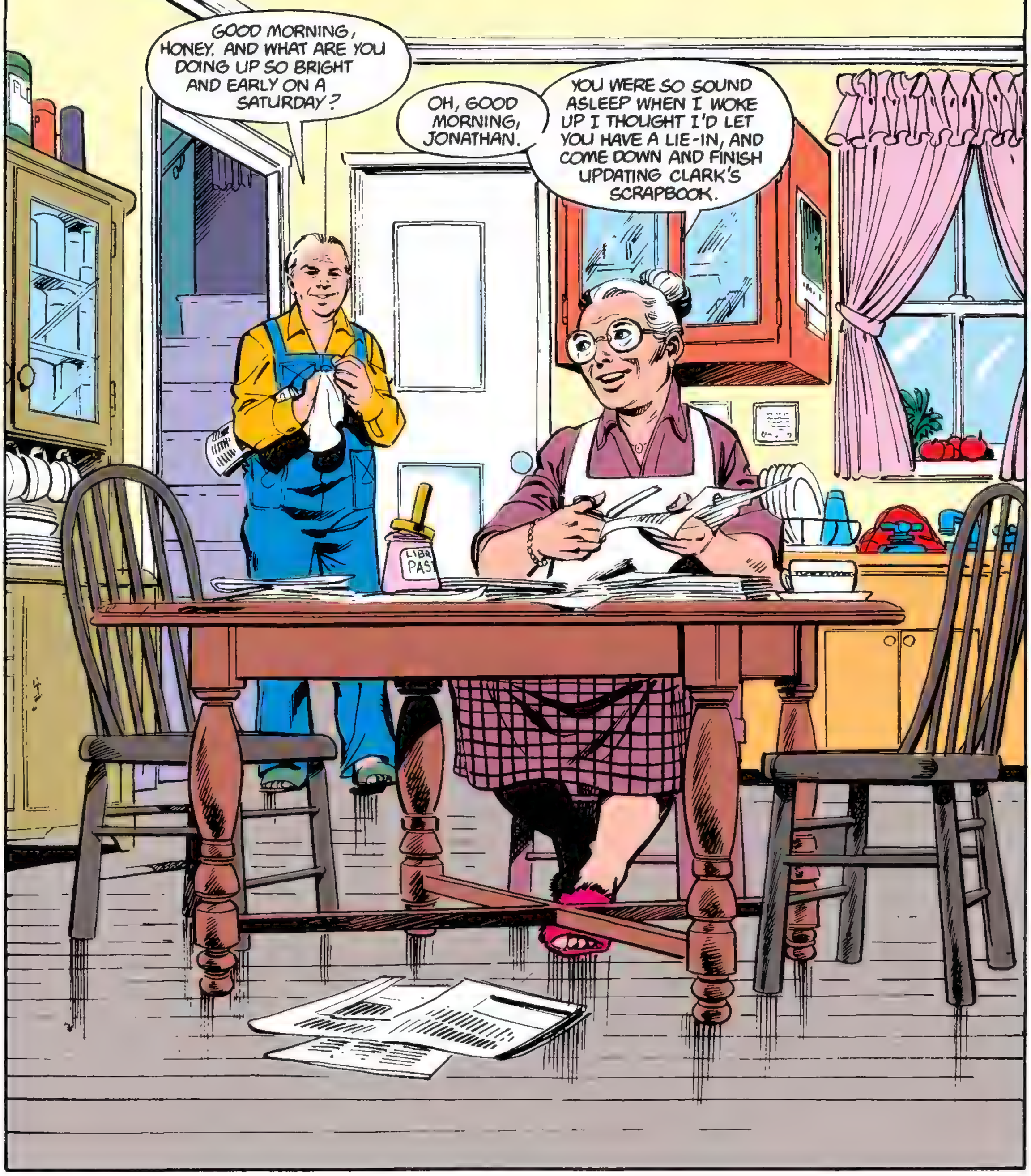
SO... TOMORROW I'M HEADING OUT. OUT INTO THE WORLD.

BUT... BEFORE I GO THERE'S SOMEONE I HAVE TO *SEE*...

SUPERMAN

CHAPTER TWO:

THE EXPOSURE



YOUR SCRAPBOOK, YOU MEAN. I STILL HAVE MY DOUBTS THAT CLARK WOULD EVEN *APPROVE* OF THIS.

OH, TISH TOSH, JONATHAN! A MOTHER'S GOT THE RIGHT TO BE *PROUD* OF HER OWN SON, HASN'T SHE?

MAYBE. BUT WHAT DO YOU SUPPOSE WOULD HAPPEN IF SOME *BURGLAR* BROKE IN HERE AND FOUND THIS SCRAPBOOK? WHAT WOULD HE MAKE OF IT, MARTHA?

YOU'VE GOT TO *STOP* READING ALL THE BIG CITY NEWS IN THESE PAPERS, JONATHAN. THINGS LIKE THAT JUST DON'T HAPPEN IN SMALLVILLE.

HOME SWEET HOME

AND IF ONE DID... WHY, ALL HE'D FIND IS THE SCRAPBOOK OF A STRANGE OLD LADY WHO LIKES TO COLLECT STORIES OF *DISASTERS* THAT DIDN'T QUITE HAPPEN!

FLOOD WATERS DIVERTED
TOWN SAVED AS HILLSIDE DAMS RIVER.

BRIDGE HOLDS TILL LAST MINUTE!
COLLAPSE WAITS FOR WORKERS TO GET CLEAR
"IT'S A MIRACLE!"

TITANIC RAISED
FABULOUS TREASU
IN MUSEUM COLLE

FAMINE ENDS IN DESERT

DIVER SAVED AS VESSEL REFLOATS
SUNKEN SHIP MYSTERIOUSLY
SES TO SURFACE AGAIN!

AL WAVE NOT HIT COAST
CEANOGRAPHIC BUREAU
LOSS TO EXPLAIN SUDDEN
UPTION OF "TSUNAMI."

CHILD SAVED FROM MOUNTAIN FALL!
REPORTS "FLYING ANGEL" CAUGHT HIM AS HE FELL

DI
AVA

BRIDGE

EARTH-QUAKE DOES NO DAMAG

BESIDES, NO ONE HAS UNCOVERED MY LITTLE SECRET IN THE SEVEN YEARS SINCE CLARK LEFT, SO WHY SHOULD WE WORRY?

YOU JUST READ YOUR PAPER...

...AND I'LL FIX YOU A NICE BIG BREAKFAST!

AH HA! BRIBERY! TRYING TO BUY ME OFF WITH STEAK AND EGGS!

WELL, THEY DO SAY EVERY MAN HAS GOT HIS PRICE...

UH, OH...

MARTHA... I THINK WE HAVE ANOTHER PIECE FOR YOUR SCRAPBOOK.

BUT NOT ONE WE EVER WANTED TO SEE!

LOOK!

OH, NO!

SMALLVILLE POST

MYSTERIOU
SUPERMA
SAVES
SPACE
PLANE

STORY ON PAGE 3

CREAK CREAK

CLARK'S ROOM!!

BE CAREFUL, JONATHAN!

SHHH!

LISTEN! THERE IS SOMEONE IN THERE...

...S-SON...?

THEY WANTED A PIECE OF ME, PA.

THEY ALL WANTED A PIECE OF ME...

"YOU KNOW I'VE BEEN MAKING METROPOLIS MORE OR LESS MY HOME BASE FOR ABOUT THREE YEARS NOW, PA.

"IT'S A GREAT TOWN. BIG. EXCITING. IT REALLY FEELS LIKE HOME.

"WELL, YESTERDAY METROPOLIS WAS ALL SET TO CAP OFF THE CELEBRATIONS FOR HER TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY.

"SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS HAD BEEN MADE TO HAVE THE EXPERIMENTAL SPACE-PLANE CONSTITUTION LAND AT METROPOLIS INTERNATIONAL.

NASA

USAF

"I WENT OUT TO THE AIRPORT MYSELF TO SEE THAT!

"EVERYTHING SEEMED TO BE GOING PERFECTLY...

"UNTIL A SMALL, CIVILIAN CRAFT SOMEHOW SLIPPED THROUGH THE SECURITY CORDON.

"IT ALL HAPPENED SO FAST EVEN I WASN'T SURE WHAT WE WERE ALL SEEING...

"...UNTIL THE LITTLE PLANE FLEW TOO CLOSE, AND...

"FOR ONE LONG, TERRIBLE MOMENT THEY JUST SEEMED TO HANG THERE, IN MID-AIR, FUSED TOGETHER, NOT SEEMING EVEN TO MOVE...

"IT WAS AS IF A MOVIE PROJECTOR HAD SUDDENLY STOPPED ON ONE FRAME OF FILM, FREEZING A FRACTION OF A SECOND INTO AN ETERNITY.

"THEN THE PROJECTOR STARTED UP AGAIN, AND THE TWO SHIPS WERE PLUNGING, SCREAMING OUT OF THE SKY...

"...STILL LOCKED TOGETHER, LIKE DANCERS IN SOME OBSCENE BALLET.

"ALMOST AS A SINGLE BEING, THE CROWD SURGED--SHOUTING, YELLING, PANIC RAGING THROUGH THEM.

"AND RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF THAT TORRENT OF HUMANITY, I KNEW, SUDDENLY KNEW, THAT FATE HAD TAKEN HOLD OF MY LIFE, THAT I WAS NO LONGER CAPTAIN OF MY OWN DESTINY.

"I TOOK OFF.

"THERE WAS NO POINT IN TRYING TO BE SECRETIVE ABOUT IT. I WAS GOING TO HAVE TO CATCH THAT SHIP AND GUIDE IT SAFELY TO THE GROUND.

"THERE WAS NO HOPE AT ALL OF PULLING THAT OFF, UNSEEN, UNPHOTOGRAPHED. I COULD ONLY MOVE FAST ENOUGH SO THAT MY FEATURES WOULD BE A BLUR."

WELL... UHH! YOU CAME ON BOARD TO... UNGH... GET A *STORY*, MISS LANE...

LOOKS... UNF... LIKE YOU'RE GONNA GET A *BIGGIE!*

IF I *SURVIVE* TO TURN IT IN, SKIPPER.

ISN'T THERE... UHHGH... ANYTHING YOU CAN DO?

WE CAN MAKE A VERY LARGE *HOLE* IN DOWN-TOWN METROPOLIS...

...UNLESS YOU KNOW SOME *PRAYERS* THAT COME WITH INSTANT ANSWERS, LOIS. THIS THING IS A *BRICK* RIGHT NOW...

...AND IT'S GOING TO *HIT* LIKE A...

WAIT A MINUTE!!

WE'RE *LEVELING!* WE'RE SLOWING DOWN!

CALAHAN! DID YOU...?

NOT ME, BOSS. WE'RE STILL DEAD STICK AND POWER DOWN.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S...

I DO.

I'VE GOT IT ON OUR BELLY CAMERA.

BUT I DON'T *BELIEVE* IT FOR A MINUTE!!

IT CAN'T BE! A FLYING MAN?!?!

DON'T ARGUE WITH IT! HE'S SAVED US! GET THE GEAR DOWN!

"I BROUGHT THE CONSTITUTION DOWN TO THE SMOOTHEST LANDING I COULD MANAGE.

"AND BEFORE I COULD DECIDE WHAT TO DO NEXT..."

HOLD IT RIGHT THERE, BUSTER!!!

"IT WAS LOIS LANE. I'D SEEN HER ON TALK SHOWS, BEEN READING HER COLUMNS IN THE DAILY PLANET. NOW SHE WAS RIGHT IN FRONT OF ME, AND I KNEW I COULDN'T ESCAPE HER QUESTIONS.

"AND... SOMEHOW I DIDN'T WANT TO.

"SHE'S... I DON'T KNOW... NOT AS BEAUTIFUL AS A MOVIE STAR, BUT SHE HAS... A QUALITY. SOMETHING I'VE NEVER SEEN IN ANY OTHER WOMAN. ALMOST A FIRE IN THOSE BIG, DARK EYES.

"FOR JUST A MOMENT IT SEEMED AS IF SOMETHING PASSED BETWEEN US. A SPARK...

"WHATEVER IT WAS, NEITHER OF US HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO REACT TO IT.

"BECAUSE THAT WAS WHEN THE MOB ARRIVED."

THEY WERE ALL OVER ME! LIKE WILD ANIMALS. LIKE MAGGOTS. CLAWING. PULLING. SCREAMING AT ME.

AND IT WAS ALL *DEMANDS!* EVERYBODY HAD SOMETHING THEY WANTED ME TO DO, TO SAY, TO *SELL!*

IT WAS AS IF MY FIRST PUBLIC APPEARANCE HAD UNLEASHED THE WORST, THE GREEDIEST, THE MOST COVETOUS PART OF EVERYONE.

SO I FLEW AWAY. FAR, FAR AWAY. I SAT ON A MOUNTAINTOP IN TIBET, AND JUST *SHOOK.* WITH OUTRAGE. WITH *FEAR!*

THEY'D TAKEN EVERYTHING YOU'VE EVER TAUGHT ME AND RIPPED IT APART.

I... I KNOW I STILL HAVE TO USE MY POWERS TO HELP PEOPLE WHO REALLY NEED ME... BUT NOW THEY'RE GOING TO BE *LOOKING FOR ME. EXPECTING ME.*

AND I JUST DON'T KNOW HOW TO DEAL WITH IT!

I THINK I DO.

SUPERMAN.

EPILOGUE: THE SUPER-HERO

WELL, MA, HOW'S IT COMING?

NEARLY DONE, CLARK. WHAT ABOUT YOU BOYS? HAVE YOU SETTLED ON A DESIGN?

YES. *IT* TOOK AWHILE, BUT PA AND I FINALLY CAME UP WITH *THIS!*

WE MADE ONE FOR THE *FRONT*, AND ONE FOR THE *BACK*.

THAT'S JUST *PERFECT!* ABSOLUTELY PERFECT! LET'S HAVE IT, AND I'LL STITCH IT RIGHT ON!

PA'S SOLVED THAT ONE TOO!

BUT...WHAT ABOUT THE *OTHER MATTER?*

OBVIOUSLY I CAN'T BE "*ON CALL*" TWENTY-FOUR HOURS A DAY. EVEN *I* NEED TIME TO RELAX AND UNWIND. TO BE *HUMAN* FOR A LITTLE WHILE.

THAT'S WHY IT'S LUCKY I DIDN'T GET THE CHANCE TO TELL ANYONE *MY NAME* AFTER I SAVED THE SHUTTLE. NOW, WITH A FEW MINOR ALTERATIONS, I CAN HAVE A PRIVATE PLACE WHERE NO ONE WILL EVER THINK TO LOOK FOR ME--A "*FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE,*" SO TO SPEAK.

MEET THE *NEW* CLARK *KENT!*

SEE, MA? WITH HIS HAIR ALL SLICKERED BACK AND AN OLD PAIR OF MY SPECTACLES, HIS WHOLE *FACE* SEEMS TO CHANGE.

ALL HE NEEDS DO IS *STOOP* A TAD, AND HE LOOKS LIKE A WHOLE DIFFERENT MAN.

AND SO LONG AS HE'S CAREFUL NEVER TO LET ON THAT HE *HAS* TWO SEPARATE IDENTITIES, HE'LL BE ABLE TO *MOVE* FREELY, LIKE ORDINARY FOLKS!

BUT NOW...LET'S SEE HOW THIS COSTUME WE'VE CONCOCTED LOOKS ALL PUT TOGETHER.

THAT'S GOOD! THE FIT IS NICE AND SNUG! I STARTED NOTICING WHEN YOU WERE ONLY TWELVE YEARS OLD THAT CLOTH RIGHT UP CLOSE AGAINST YOU NEVER SEEMED TO TEAR OR GET DIRTY.

BESIDES, IT SHOWS OFF YOUR *MUSCLES!*

MAAA...

GOTTA ADMIT YOU WERE *RIGHT* ABOUT THE BOOTS, MA. THEY ADD A NICE *SWASH-BUCKLER* LOOK!

BUT IT'S THE *CAPE* THAT'S MY FAVORITE, JONATHAN. EVEN THOUGH IT *MAY TEAR*, NOT BEING SKIN-TIGHT.

HMMM. MAYBE WE SHOULD...

NOT TO WORRY, MA. THE WHOLE THING WORKS JUST FINE! IT'S GOT EXACTLY THE *SYMBOLIC LOOK* I WANTED.

SO, FROM NOW ON, WHENEVER THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO NEED MY VERY *SPECIAL* KIND OF HELP, IT WON'T BE A JOB FOR PLAIN, ORDINARY *CLARK KENT*...

...IT'LL BE A JOB FOR
SUPERMAN

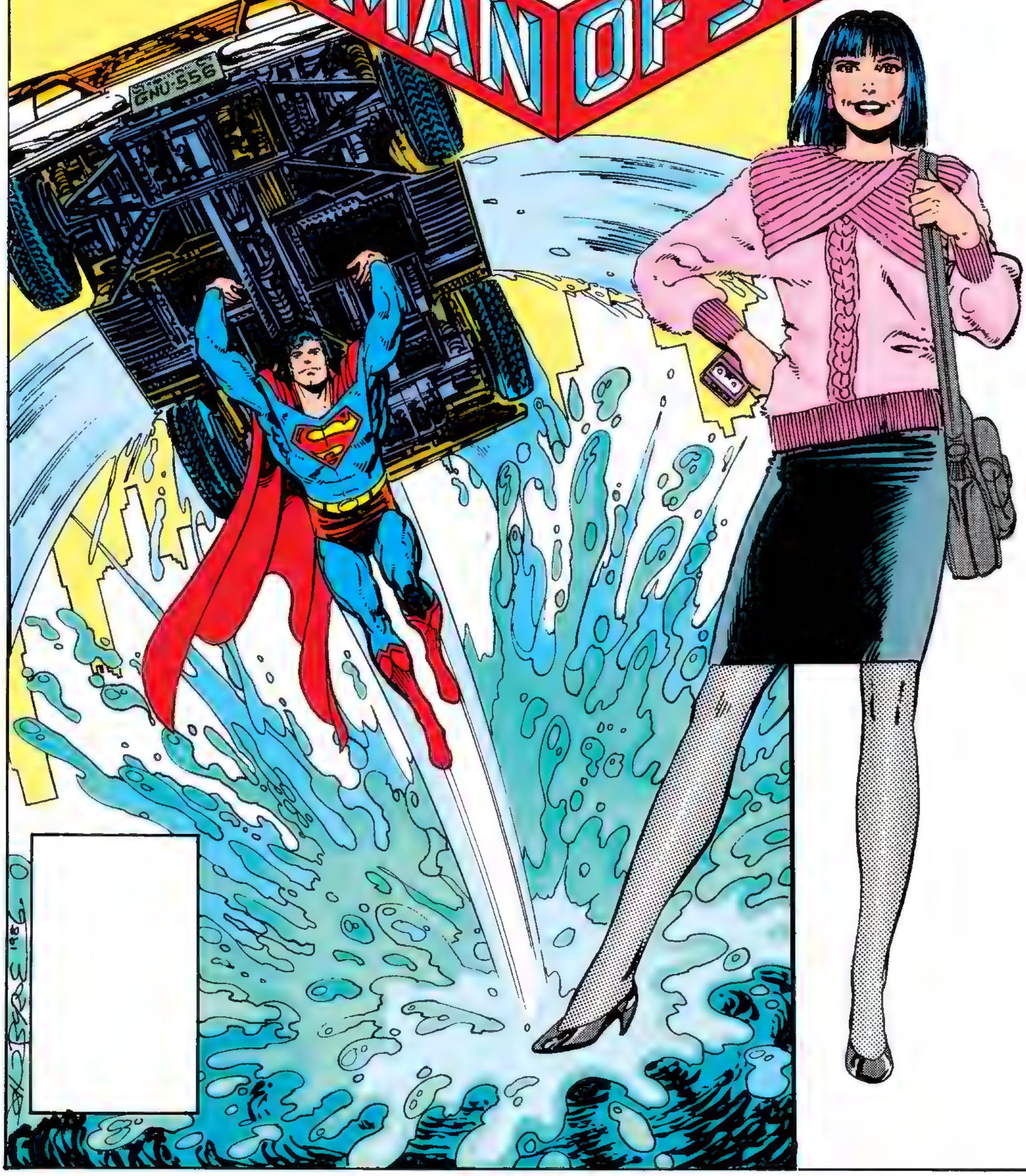
A 6 PART MINI-SERIES BY BYRNE & GIORDANO

INTRODUCING--LOIS LANE!

No.2

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

SUPERMAN™ THE MAN OF STEEL™



BOOK TWO

SUPERMAN THE STORY OF THE CENTURY!

OMIGOSH!! IT'S *HIM!!*

IT'S *HIM!!!*

Café Metropole

Café Metropole

TAXI

DAILY PLANET

YOU'RE SURE? THAT'S THE "*SUPERMAN*" WHO SAVED THAT CRASHING SPACE PLANE?

IT MUST BE!

HE'S CHANGED HIS *OUTFIT*, BUT WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU SAW A FLYING MAN IN *METROPOLIS?*

THEN GET AFTER HIM, LOIS! STAY WITH HIM NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS!

GET ME THAT *STORY!!*

AS GOOD AS GOT, CHIEF! TELL THE RE-WRITE BOYS TO STAY CLOSE TO THEIR PHONES--

--*LOIS LANE* IS ON THE JOB!!

THERE SHE IS, BOSS.

JUST LIKE YOU *PREDICTED.*

OF COURSE. STOP THE CAR AND CALL HER OVER, *GUTHRIE.*

BOOK

MISS LANE! YO, MISS LANE!

MISTER L WANTS TO SEE YOU.

GUTHRIE! TELL YOUR BOSS I'M BUSY!

YOU CAN TELL 'IM YOURSELF, MISS LANE. HE'S RIGHT *HERE.*

LOOK, SPARE ME THE CONFRONTATION, WOULD YOU? I'M IN A MAJOR HURRY, AND *LEX* CAN ALWAYS CATCH UP TO ME *LATER.*

BUT--BUT MISS LANE, HE'S LEAVIN' FOR *SOUTH AMERICA* THIS EVENIN'. HE WON'T BE BACK FOR AT LEAST A *YEAR!*

THEN HE'LL HAVE TO CATCH ME *MUCH* LATER. SEE YOU!

BLAST! BLAST! BLAST! BLAST! BLAST!

LOADING

THERE'S NO *SIGN* OF HIM. JUST THAT HALF-SECOND DELAY, AND HE'S *DISAPPEARED!*

WELL, *SAM LANE'S* OLDEST DAUGHTER ISN'T BEATEN *THAT* EASILY.

HI, *SID?* HI, IT'S LOIS.. IS *CHUCK* AROUND? I HAVE A SLIGHTLY *HUGE* FAVOR TO ASK...

ERIN + TERRY

BOMP MA

TEN MINUTES LATER...

NUTS! I STILL DON'T *SEE* HIM!

NO SURPRISIN', LOIS. THIS FLYIN' MAN OF YOURS AIN'T LIKE A *PLANE.*

LEXCORP

LEXCOR

HE COULD BE DOWN IN THEM CANYONS 'TWEEN THE BUILDINGS, AN' YOU'D *NEVER* SPOT 'IM FROM UP HERE.

MAYBE. MAYBE. HIT THE *POLICE BAND.* THERE MIGHT BE SOMETHING COOKING THAT'LL LURE MY FRIEND OUT OF *HIDING.*

4

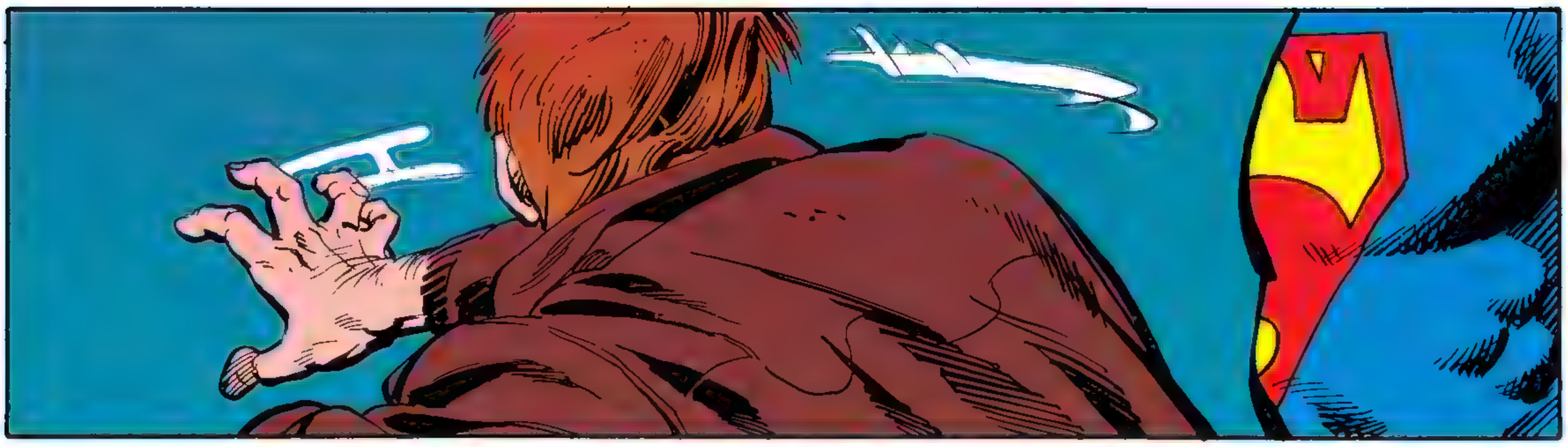
MEANWHILE...

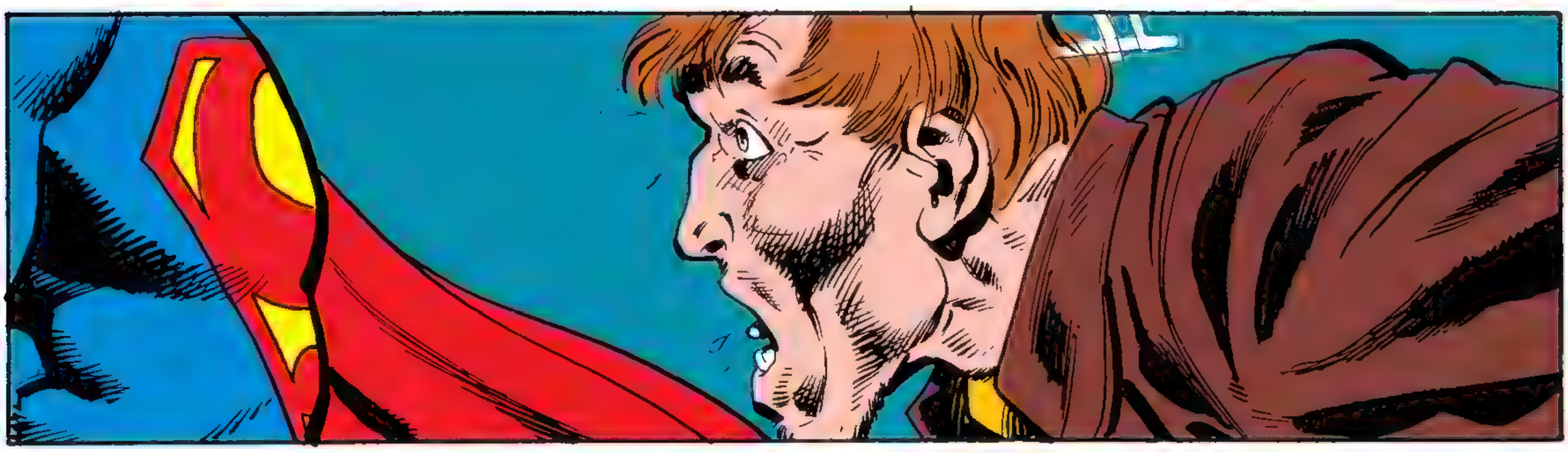
HEY!!

OH-HHH

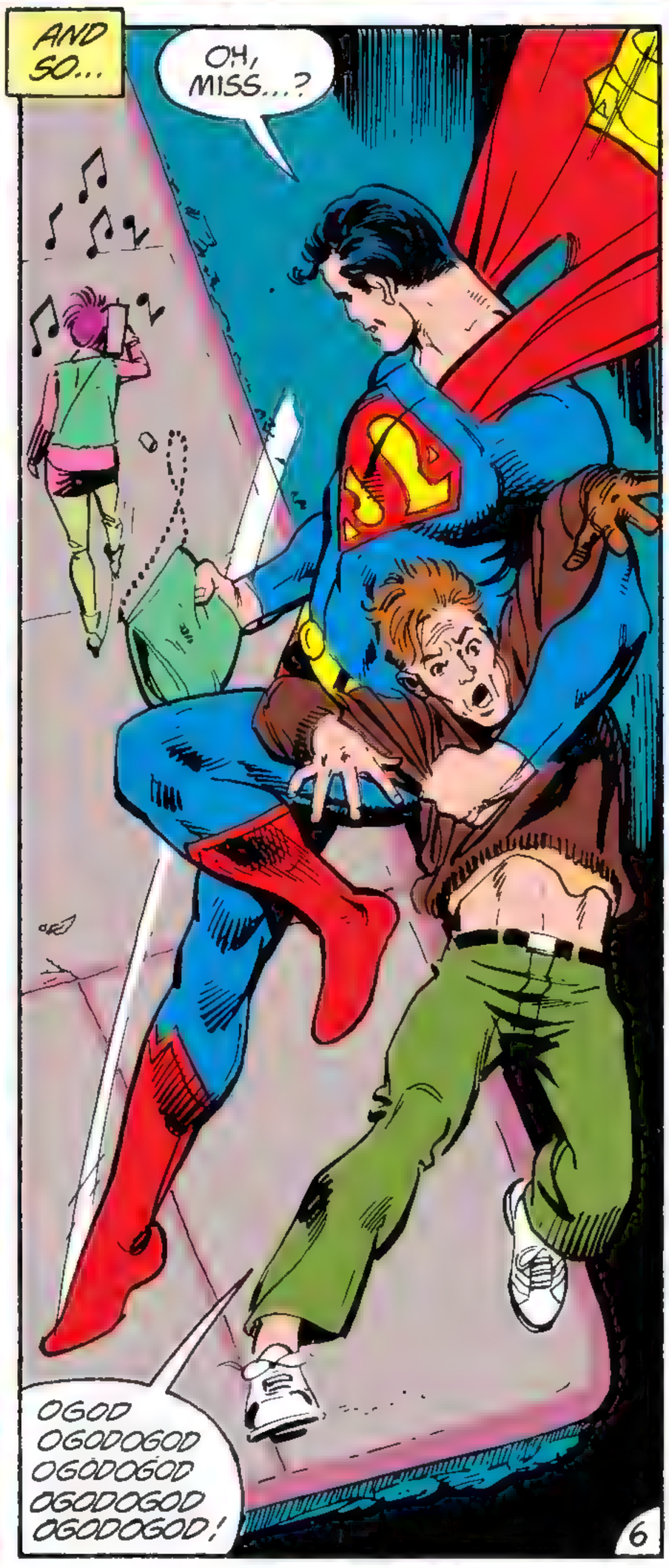
MAAAANN!!

5





YOU DON'T *REALLY* WANT TO STEAL THAT YOUNG WOMAN'S PURSE, DO YOU?
SHE DOESN'T LOOK AS IF SHE HAS MUCH MORE MONEY TO SPARE THAN YOU.
HA-MANNA HA-MANNA HA-MANNA


AND SO...
OH, MISS...?
OGOD OGODOGOD OGODOGOD OGODOGOD OGODOGOD!
6

I BELIEVE *THIS* BELONGS TO YOU...?

...INTERRUPT THIS PROGRAM FOR AN IMPORTANT NEWS BULLETIN.

POLICE HAVE SURROUNDED CLANCY'S LIQUOR STORE ON EAST FIFTIETH STREET, WHERE FOUR ARMED GUNMEN ARE KNOWN TO BE HOLDING AT LEAST THREE PERSONS HOSTAGE...

YOU'LL BOTH HAVE TO EXCUSE ME, NOW. THAT SOUNDS LIKE SOMETHING A LITTLE MORE UP MY ALLEY.

HELP KEE METROPO CLEA DON'T LI

LET ME JUST MAKE CERTAIN OUR FRIEND HERE DOESN'T *STRAY* TOO FAR...

YEOWP!

...BY HANGING HIM FROM THIS LAMP POST.

HEY! PUMME *DOWN!*

THAT SHOULD HOLD HIM UNTIL YOU CAN CALL THE POLICE AND PRESS CHARGES.

OH... AND I THINK THAT RADIO IS A TRIFLE *LOUD*, DON'T YOU?

AFTER ALL, IN A CITY THIS *SIZE*, CONSIDERATION FOR OTHERS IS THE ONLY THING THAT KEEPS LIFE *BEARABLE*.

'BYE, NOW!

MEANWHILE...

NOW HEAR THIS! YOU IN THE STORE!

THIS IS CAPTAIN REAGAN, OF THE SPECIAL WEAPONS AND TACTICS SQUAD!

WINES and BEER

Clancy's LIQUOR

WINES and BEERS

I'M GIVING YOU JUST ONE MINUTE TO COME OUT.

AND YOU CAN START RELEASING THE HOSTAGES NOW.

SWAT

METROPOLIS POLICE

IN YOUR EAR, PIG! YOU COME ONE STEP CLOSER...

... AND WE'LL START DECORATING THIS STORE WITH THESE PEOPLE'S *BRAINS!*

DAMN!

I WAS KINDA HOPING MY *REPUTATION* WOULD BE ENOUGH TO SCARE THEM OUTTA THERE.

GUESS NOT, SKIPPER. LOOKS LIKE WE'LL REALLY HAVE TO GO IN *AFTER* 'EM.

BUT THERE ARE *BOUND* TO BE CIVILIAN CASUALTIES...

SWAT

S.WAT

METROPOLIS POLICE

MAYBE NOT. LET *ME* HELP.

HUH? WHAT IN THE NAME OF...?

WHAT *CIRCUS* DID *YOU* ESCAPE FROM??

NO CIRCUS, CAPTAIN. WILL YOU ASK YOUR MEN TO PULL BACK, PLEASE?

I DON'T WANT TO RISK THEM GETTING HIT BY *STRAY BULLETS.*

8

"STRAY...?"

WHO DO YOU THINK...

HEY! COME BACK HERE!

JUST DO AS I ASK, PLEASE, CAPTAIN. BELIEVE ME, IT WILL MAKE YOUR LIFE MUCH EASIER.

JUST HOLD IT RIGHT THERE, PRETTY BOY.

ONE MORE STEP AND YOU'RE DOG-FOOD!

OH, COME ON NOW.

WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF? YOU DON'T THINK I'M HIDING ANY WEAPONS IN THIS OUTFIT, DO YOU?

NO... I...

HEY! I SAID HOLD IT!

I SAID HOLD IT!

HOLD IT!

HEY!

KRIMP!

9

HOLY SPIT!
DID YOU SEE..??
I SAW IT. BUT I DON'T BELIEVE IT!!
HOW... HOW'D HE DO THAT??
DON'T WASTE TIME WORRYIN' ABOUT TRICKS, YOU IDIOTS!
WASTE TH' MOTHER!!!
BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM
10

HE--HE AIN'T *HUMAN!!*

HIS EYES! WHAT'S HAPPENIN' TO HIS *EYES?!?*

HEY!

MY GUN! IT'S GETTIN'...

HOT!!

AND NOW...

A COUPLE OF MY *SOFTEST* TAPS...

...AND YOU CREEPS SHOULD BE IN *DREAMLAND* FOR ABOUT AN HOUR.

NOW, THEN...

Journal

Y-Y-YOU WOULDN'T HIT A *LADY*...

...WOULD YOU...?

A LADY?

NO. I'D NEVER HIT A *LADY.*

PLNK

BUT THEN, I'VE NEVER MET A *LADY* WHO CARRIES *DYNAMITE* UNDER HER COAT.

ESPECIALLY NOT DYNAMITE RIGGED TO *EXPLODE* AT THE TOUCH OF A FINGER.

I'LL JUST *ZAP* THESE WIRES --SOMETHING I DIDN'T WANT TO RISK DOING WHILE YOU WERE STILL *WEARING* THE THING.

NOW, IF YOU GENTLEMEN WILL EXCUSE ME...

...I DON'T THINK MY PRESENCE IS REQUIRED HERE ANY LONGER.

MEAN-WHILE...

THERE'S THE PLACE, LOIS. JUST LIKE THEY SAID ON THE RADIO.

GREAT! GET DOWN CLOSE TO ONE OF THOSE ROOFTOPS SO I CAN JUMP OUTTA THIS BEAST.

"JUMP...?"

ARE YOU *NUTS*, WOMAN??

JUST *DO IT*, CHUCK. I DIDN'T WIN MY *PULITZER PRIZE* BY SITTING IN FRONT OF A WORD PROCESSOR ALL DAY.

AND SO...

CATCH YOU LATER, PAL.

AND *THANKS!*

JUST DON'T GET *KILLED*, LOIS. MISTER L WOULD HAVE MY *HIDE* IF HE THOUGHT I'D HELPED YOU DO THAT!

I'M SURE HE WOULD, TOO.

I GUESS *LEX LUTHOR* IS A SITUATION I REALLY MUST *ADDRESS*, ONE OF THESE DAYS.

AFTER ALL, HE *IS* THE MOST *POWERFUL* MAN IN METROPOLIS.

OR IS THAT "*USED TO BE*"?

AND, HIS ATTENTIONS *ARE* VERY *FLATTERING*.

BUT I'M JUST NOT IN THE MARKET FOR WHAT HE'S *SELLING*.

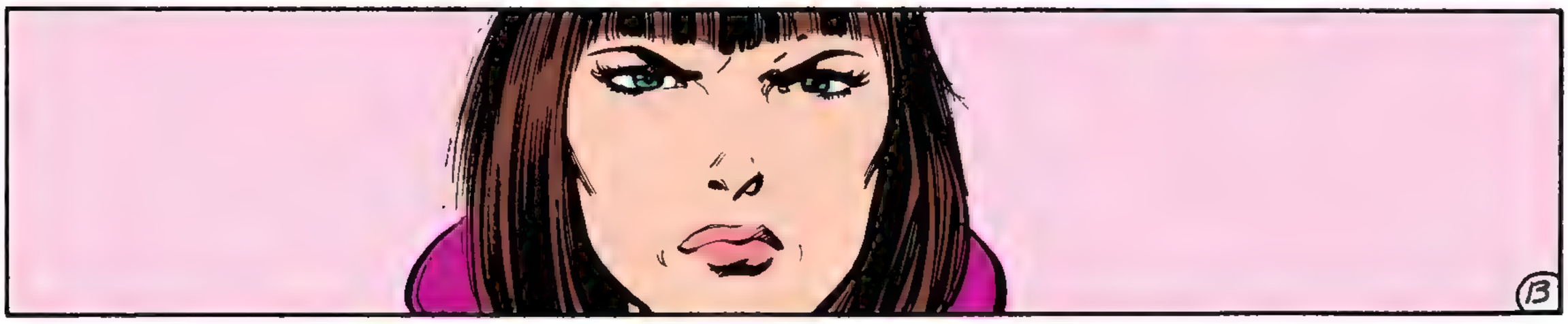
CAPTAIN REAGAN! AM I IN TIME?

LOIS LANE!

THEN MY GUESS WAS *RIGHT!* THAT *WAS* THE MYSTERY "*SUPERMAN*" YOU DID THAT PIECE ON LAST WEEK.

THEN, HE'S *HERE?*

HE *WAS*. TOOK OFF JUST A FEW SECONDS AGO.



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AND IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOW...

SORRY, MISS LANE...

...HE *WAS* HERE...

...BUT YOU JUST...

...MISSED HIM.

HI, MISS LANE! I...

G-GOLLY! WHAT'S WRONG? YOU LOOK *MISERABLE!*

AND WHY SHOULDN'T I, *JIMMY?*

I'VE SPENT THE BETTER PART OF A *WEEK* CHASING OUR MYSTERY MAN ALL OVER METROPOLIS...

...AND ALL I'VE GOT TO SHOW FOR MY TROUBLE IS *SORE FEET.*

AND JUST TO ADD INSULT TO INJURY-- LOOK AT *THIS!* THE OTHER PAPERS HAVE PICKED UP ON MY "*SUPERMAN*" REFERENCE.

I'VE MANAGED TO *NAME* THE GUY, WITHOUT EVEN KNOWING WHO HE IS!!

EAGL

UPERMAN OPS SUBWAY

SAVES WOMAN FALLEN ON TRACKS

WHO IS THE SUPERMAN?

METROPOLI

SUPERM FOILS ARMOR CAR HEIST!

ARTIST'S RENDERING

MYSTERY SUPER-HERO VANISHES AGAIN

JEEPERS, THAT'S *ROUGH*, MISS LANE.

TOO BAD YOU CAN'T FIND A WAY TO BE ON THE SPOT *BEFORE* HE GETS THERE.

YEAH. WELL, UNTIL I BECOME *CLAIRVOYANT*, THE ONLY WAY I CAN DO THAT IS TO...

TO...

SUPERMAN STOPS BANK HOLDUP

HMMMMMMMMM...

15

WELL... THINGS SEEM TO HAVE QUIETED DOWN A BIT.

IN THE PAST FORTY-EIGHT HOURS THERE'VE BEEN NO OBVIOUS CRIMES OF ANY KIND IN METROPOLIS.

WOULD IT BE *IMMODEST* OF ME TO TAKE THAT AS A SIGN THAT THE UNDERWORLD HAS *GOTTEN THE MESSAGE?*

AS LONG AS *I'M* ON THE JOB THERE'LL BE NO ROOM FOR...

HOLD IT!

HELP! HELLP!!

GETTING A LITTLE AHEAD OF YOURSELF THERE, *CLARK?*

HMMM!

NOT A *CRIME* AFTER ALL. A *DAMSEL* IN *DISTRESS!*

AND NOT JUST ANY DAMSEL.

LOIS LANE!!

16

THAT LOOKS LIKE IT MUST BE THE SPOT WHERE HER CAR WENT OFF THE END OF THE PIER.

LEXIMPORT

HMMMMMM

THERE YOU GO. ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, MISS LANE?

A BIT WATER-LOGGED...

...BUT OTHERWISE, FINE. THANKS TO *YOU!*

DON'T MENTION IT. BUT IT'D PROBABLY BE WISE IF YOU GOT INTO SOME *DRY* CLOTHES AS SOON AS YOU CAN.

HERE, LET ME *FLY* YOU HOME.

OH-HHH!

YOU... KNOW WHERE I *LIVE...?*

OF COURSE, MISS LANE. I KNOW WHERE *EVERYONE* LIVES.

THERE. NOW, IF YOU'LL FORGIVE MY DASHING OFF, THERE ARE OTHER MATTERS I NEED TO ATTEND TO.

TAKE CARE NOW.

YEAH...

...ER...'BYE...ER...

HEY!

NO! WAIT!

COME BACK HERE!!!

YES...?

LATER...

THANKS AGAIN FOR WAITING WHILE I CLEANED MYSELF UP A BIT.

...ER, I THOUGHT WE MIGHT HAVE A LITTLE *SNACK*. SOME WHITE WINE AND BRIE...?

WELL, I HOPE YOU WON'T THINK ME TOO UNGRATEFUL, MISS LANE...

...BUT I DON'T *DRINK*, GENERALLY SPEAKING.

AND I NEVER REALLY ACQUIRED A *TASTE* FOR BRIE.

YOUR LOSS. IT'S ONE OF LIFE'S GREAT *PLEASURES*.

NOW, WHERE WERE WE?

FROM WHAT I'VE PICKED UP, YOU CAN *FLY*--YOU'RE VERY, VERY *FAST*--YOU CAN *SEE THROUGH ANYTHING*--AND YOU HAVE SOME KIND OF HEAT-RAY *ZAP* IN YOUR EYES...

... WHICH ARE *BLUE*.

YES... BUT AS I'VE ALREADY SAID, MISS LANE, I DON'T THINK KNOWING ALL THIS WILL BE OF MUCH USE TO YOU.

YOU'RE TOO *MODEST*. YOU HAPPEN TO BE THE STORY OF THE CENTURY, MISTER...

MISTER...

ER... JUST WHAT *DO* WE CALL YOU, BY THE WAY?

I THINK THE NAME *YOU* GAVE ME IS QUITE *APPROPRIATE*, MISS LANE.

"*SUPERMAN*"?

ALL RIGHT, SUPERMAN IT IS! NOW, IS THERE ANY WAY I CAN GET YOU TO CALL ME "*LOIS*"?

OF COURSE. I'D BE DELIGHTED, LOIS.

19

GOOD!

NOW, WHAT ABOUT SOME OF THE OTHER DETAILS? LIKE WHERE YOU'RE *FROM?*

ARE YOU A *METROPOLIS* BOY, OR ARE YOU FROM *OUT OF TOWN?*

I GUESS I'D HAVE TO SAY "*OUT OF TOWN,*" LOIS.

TO BE HONEST, I DON'T REALLY *KNOW* EXACTLY WHERE I'M FROM. I GUESS IT REALLY DOESN'T MATTER.

WHAT MATTERS IS THAT I THINK AND FEEL AS AN *AMERICAN.*

YOU COULD DO A LOT WORSE. I WAS WONDERING...

YOU'RE *LEAVING?*

YES.

THERE'S NOTHING MORE I CAN TELL YOU, LOIS. AND AS I SAID...

...WHAT I *HAVE* TOLD YOU ISN'T GOING TO BE OF MUCH USE.

SO I'LL SAY GOOD-BYE, FOR NOW.

OH... JUST OUT OF CURIOSITY... DO YOU *ALWAYS* DRIVE AROUND WITH AN *AQUA-LUNG* UNDER THE FRONT SEAT OF YOUR CAR?

ER...

AH...

WOW!!

HE *KNEW!* ALL THE TIME, HE *KNEW!!*

20

SHE'S QUITE A WOMAN, LOIS LANE. *QUITE* A WOMAN! AND QUITE A *REPORTER*, TOO!

IMAGINE, *DELIBERATELY* DRIVING HER CAR OFF A PIER, JUST TO LURE ME IN FOR AN INTERVIEW.

GOOD THING I WASN'T ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE *WORLD* AT THE TIME.

I DIDN'T NOTICE A *RESCUE CREW* STANDING BY, AND AN AQUA-LUNG AS SMALL AS THE ONE SHE HAD IN THE CAR WOULD HAVE RUN OUT BY THE TIME I HEARD HER CALLS FOR HELP..

...IF I EVER *DID*, AT SUCH RANGE.

DAILY PLAN

I SUPPOSE I SHOULD GET AROUND TO TESTING THE *LIMITS* OF MY *SUPER-SENSES* ONE OF THESE DAYS.

BUT NOT JUST NOW. RIGHT NOW IT'S TIME TO KEEP MY *APPOINTMENT* WITH *PERRY WHITE*.

THE APPOINTMENT I MADE *TWO DAYS AGO* AS *CLARK KENT!*

21

TWO HOURS LATER...

MISS LANE! DIDJA *HEAR?* THE CHIEF JUST HIRED...

LATER, JIM. I'VE GOT BIG FISH TO FRY!

STOP THE PRESSES, PERRY!! I'VE GOT THE STORY ON *SUPERMAN!*

WHAT??

LOIS, DIDN'T YOU PICK UP THE MESSAGE I LEFT ON YOUR ANSWERING MACHINE?

MESSAGE...?

NO. I DIDN'T CHECK MY MESSAGES. I WAS TOO BUSY WRITING THIS STORY...?

HEY, IS IT *ME*, OR DO I DETECT A LACK OF *EXCITEMENT* OVER THIS *SUPER-SCOOP?*

SORRY, LOIS. I KNOW HOW HARD YOU'VE WORKED FOR THIS, BUT I CAN'T GET ALL WOUND UP...

THE EXCLUSIVE STORY ON SUPERMAN

... OVER A STORY WE *ALREADY HAVE!!*

"*ALREADY HAVE...?*"

ALREADY HAVE???!?

RELAX, LOIS. RELAX. YOU WERE *BEATEN TO IT*, THAT'S ALL. HAPPENS TO THE *BEST* REPORTERS. USED TO HAPPEN TO ME ALL THE TIME.

PERRY WHITE MANAGING EDITOR

AND YOU MIGHT AS WELL TAKE A GOOD LOOK AT THE FELLA WHO GOT THE SUPERMAN STORY AHEAD OF YOU.

HE'S JOINED THE PLANET STAFF, AS OF TODAY.

LOIS LANE, MEET CLARK KENT!

A 6 PART MINI SERIES BY BYRNE & GIORDANO

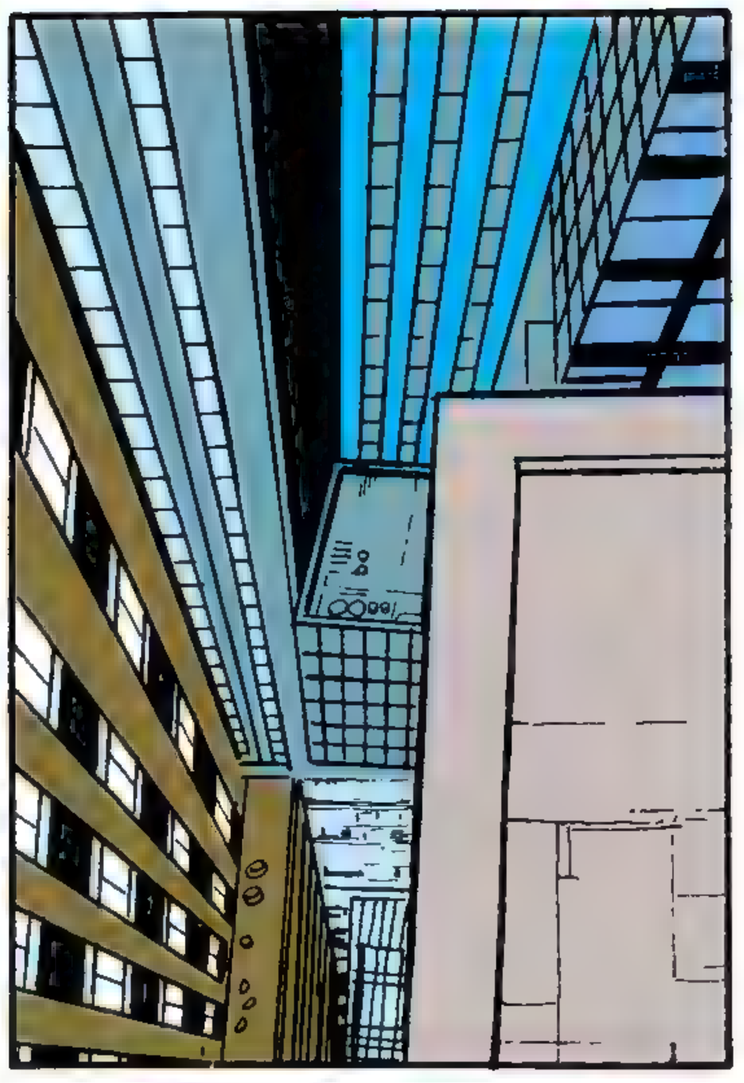
FACE-TO-FACE WITH THE DARK KNIGHT!

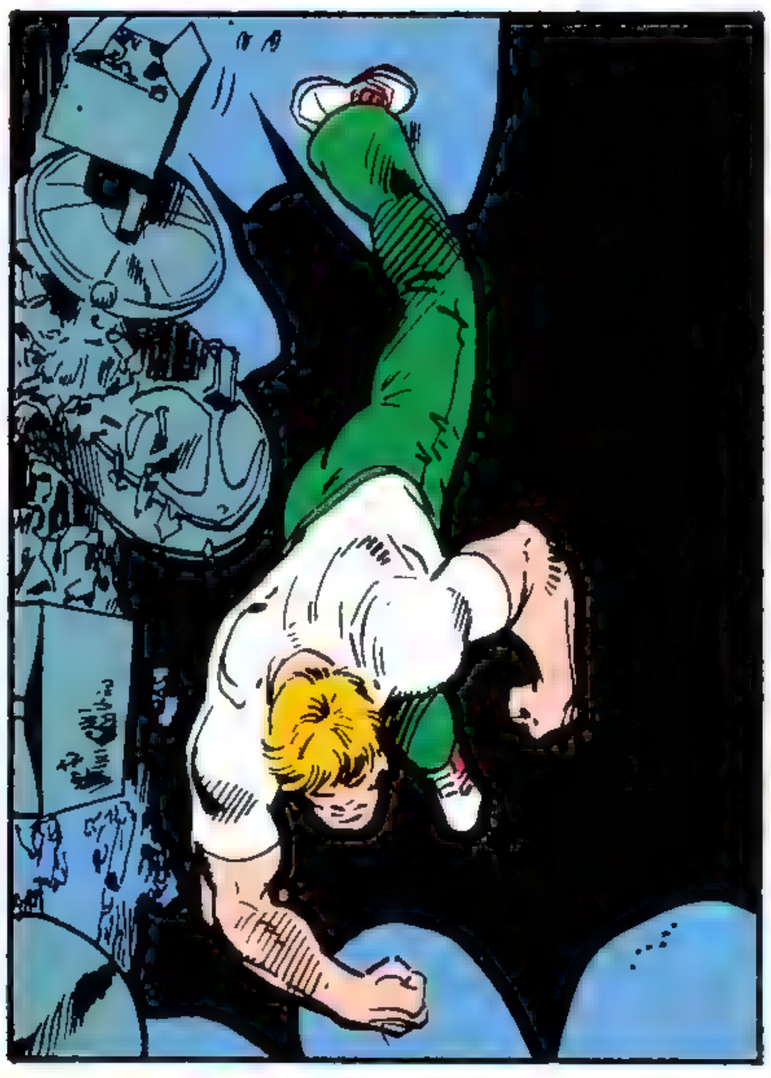
No. 3

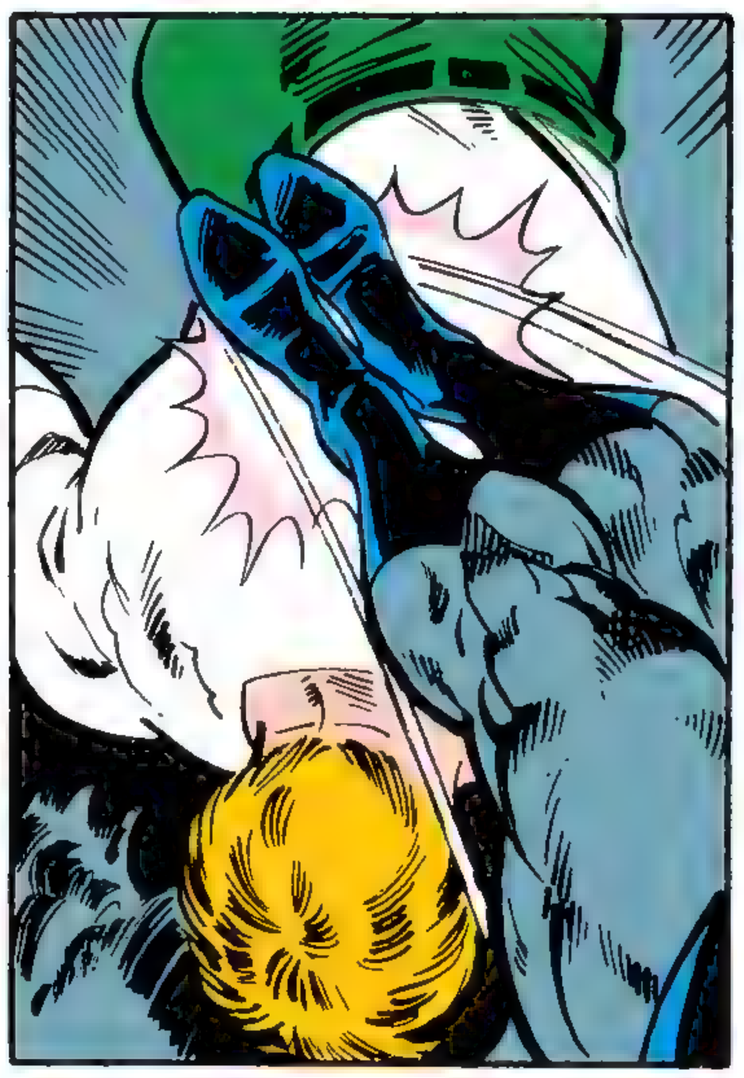
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

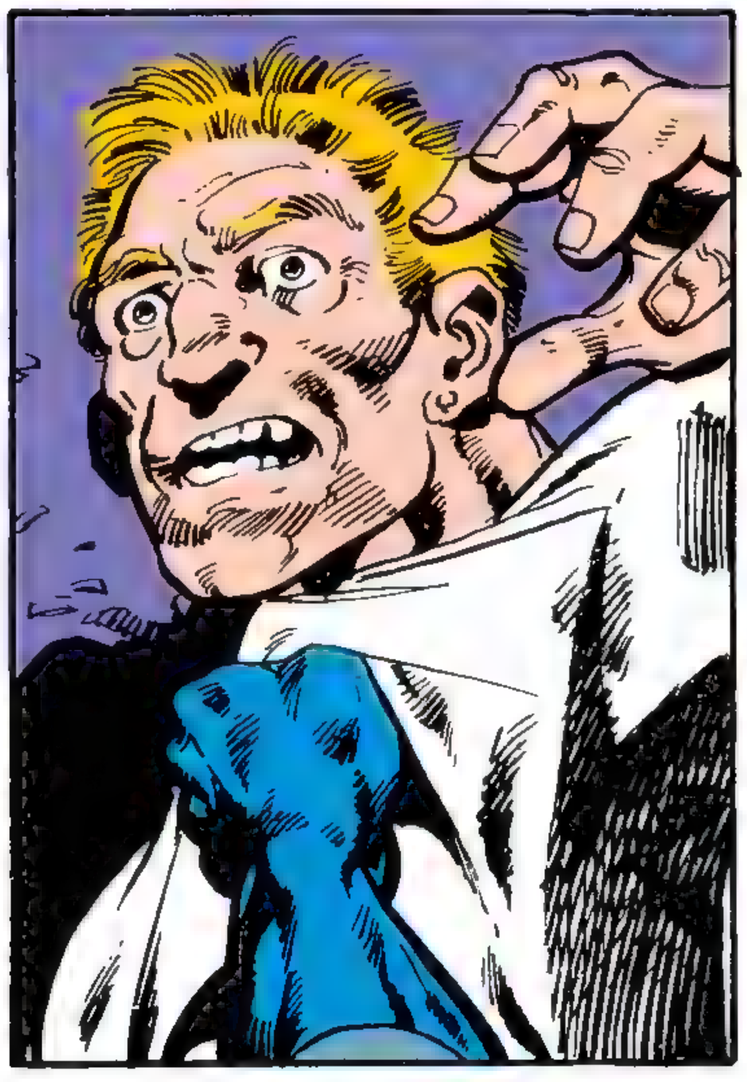
THE MAN OF STEEL

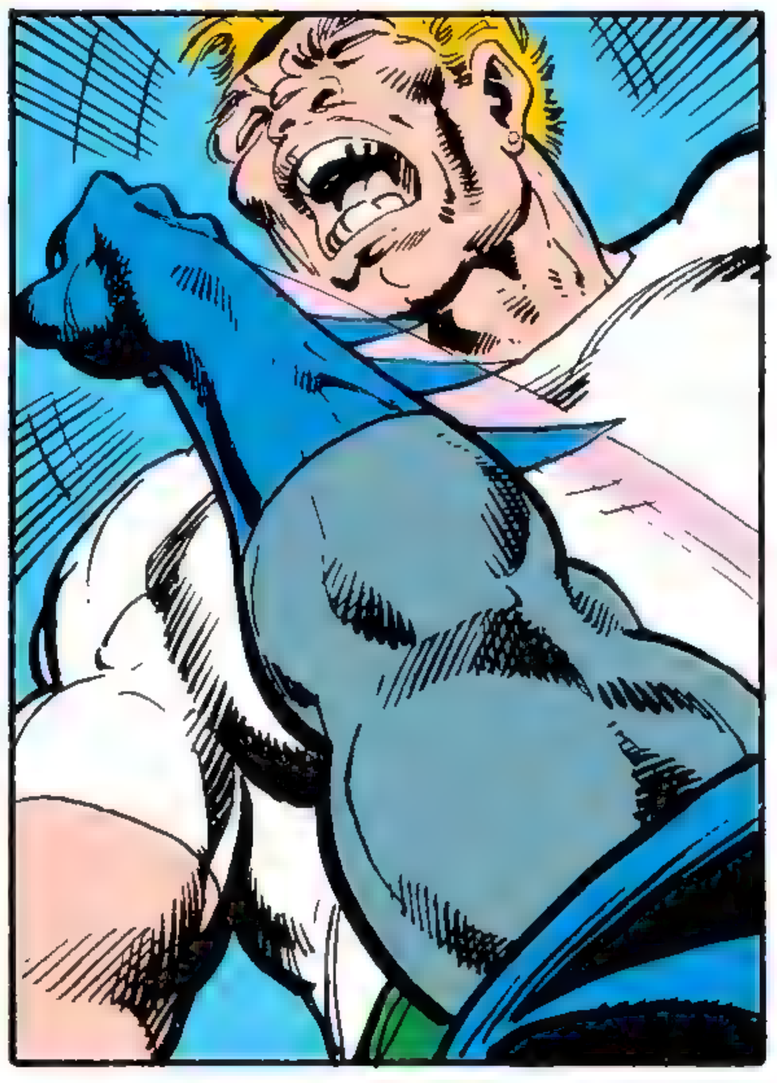
BOOK THREE











ONE NIGHT in GOTHAM CITY...

YOU'RE WASTING MY *TIME*, BULL.

YOU KNOW HOW I *HATE* HAVING MY TIME WASTED.

2

DON'T!

DON'T *HIT* ME AGAIN!

I DON'T KNOW NOTHIN'! HONEST I DON'T!!

SHE'S GOING TO *STRIKE* AGAIN TONIGHT, BULL. I *KNOW* SHE IS. BUT *YOU* KNOW SOMETHING *MORE*.

YOU KNOW *WHERE*. AND YOU'RE GOING TO *TELL* ME.

I... I *CAN'T!* I CAN'T! SHE'LL *KILL* ME!

AND I'LL DO A LOT *WORSE* THAN THAT, BULL. I'LL *HURT* YOU. AND YOU'LL *STAY* HURT.

NOW, *SPILL* IT. EVERY SECOND YOU WASTE MY TIME HERE IS A SECOND IN HER FAVOR.

EIGHT PEOPLE HAVE *DIED* ALREADY. I'M NOT GOING TO *TOLERATE* ANY MORE DEATHS. NOW *TALK*. WHERE DOES SHE PLAN TO STRIKE NEXT?

SPLAT!

3

REMARKABLE.

HE'S ACTUALLY MORE AFRAID OF *HER* THAN HE IS OF *ME*.

TIME HE WAS TAUGHT THE *ERROR* OF HIS WAYS.

THE ONLY WAY *ONE MAN* CAN CLEAN UP THIS TOWN IS IF ALL THE LOW-LIFE STAY GOOD AND *SCARED*.

AND THAT MEANS DISHING OUT A FEW *OBJECT LESSONS*, ONCE IN A WHILE.

TOO BAD FOR BULL. HE'S QUITE *ATHLETIC*, IN HIS OWN WAY.

HE'S NOT GOING TO *LIKE* HAVING TO GET AROUND ON *CRUTCHES* FOR...

WHAT THE...?!?

SOMETHING'S GOT HOLD OF MY LINE!

4

NO...,

NOT SOME*THING*...

SOME*ONE*!!

SUPERMAN!!

ALWAYS FLATTERED TO BE *RECOGNIZED*, OUTLAW.

NOW, YOU JUST HOLD ON TIGHT TO THAT ROPE. I WOULDN'T WANT YOU TO *FALL* BEFORE WE GET YOU TO *POLICE HEADQUARTERS*.

"POLICE...?" NO, I DON'T THINK SO. THAT'S AN ESTABLISHMENT I PREFER TO VISIT ON MY OWN TERMS.

WELL, I'M AFRAID I'M NOT ABOUT TO GIVE YOU MUCH *CHOICE* IN THE...

HEY!

HE LET GO OF THE LINE!

HE'LL PLUNGE TO HIS *DEATH* IF I DON'T...

!?!

5

GONE!!

THERE'S NOT A SIGN OF HIM!

HOW CAN THAT BE? IN THE REPORTS OF HIS ACTIVITIES I SAW NO INDICATION OF *SUPER-POWERS.*

HE'S A SUPERB ATHLETE AND AN INTUITIVE GENIUS BY ALL ACCOUNTS, BUT I READ NOTHING TO SUGGEST HE COULD *FLY*, OR MOVE AT *SUPER-SPEED*...

OR TURN *INVISIBLE.*

INVISIBILITY IS A *RELATIVE THING*, SUPERMAN.

SOMETIMES ALL IT REQUIRES IS *WITS*, AND A MATCHLESS KNOWLEDGE OF THE CITY.

BATMAN!

6

VERY GOOD, FRIEND. VERY, *VERY* GOOD.

I WON'T *UNDERESTIMATE* YOU A SECOND TIME. THIS TIME I'M GOING TO GRAB *YOU* INSTEAD OF YOUR BAT-LINE...

HOLD IT!!

BEFORE YOU *TOUCH* ME, YOU'D BETTER TAKE A QUICK LOOK WITH THOSE *VISION POWERS* I HEAR YOU HAVE.

SPECIFICALLY, YOUR *INFRA-RED* VISION.

YOU'VE DONE YOUR *HOMEWORK*, HAVEN'T YOU? BUT YOU CAN'T REALLY THINK YOU'RE GOING TO DELAY THE INEVITABLE WITH...

?!?

A SIMPLE *FORCE-FIELD*, SUPERMAN. INVISIBLE. INTANGIBLE. JUST LIKE THE FORCE-FIELDS USED IN AIRPORT *METAL DETECTORS*.

ONLY THIS ONE ISN'T KEYED TO DETECT *METAL*. IT'S SET TO DETECT *SUPER-DENSE BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL*. IN OTHER WORDS, SUPERMAN...

YOU!!

WHAT IN THE WORLD...??

7

AND YOU THINK THAT'S GOING TO *STOP* ME?

YOU REALIZE I COULD HAVE YOU BEHIND *BARS* BEFORE YOU EVEN KNOW YOU'VE *MOVED*, DON'T YOU?

OF COURSE. BUT, SINCE I READ THE REPORTS OF YOUR *DEBUT* IN THE *DAILY PLANET* EIGHT MONTHS AGO, I'VE RATHER EXPECTED WE MIGHT *CROSS PATHS*--

--AND FIND OURSELVES *AT ODDS*, GIVEN THE DIFFERENCES IN OUR METHODS.

SO I DEVISED A WAY TO *STOP* YOU, SUPERMAN.

IF YOU *PENETRATE* THE FIELD SURROUNDING MY BODY, AN ELECTRONIC SIGNAL WILL GO OUT, INSTANTANEOUSLY.

THAT SIGNAL WILL DETONATE A *BOMB* HIDDEN SOMEWHERE IN GOTHAM CITY. THE EXPLOSION WILL *KILL* AN INNOCENT PERSON.

WH-WHAT...???

YOU...YOU'D REALLY *DO* THAT?

YOU'D PLACE AN INNOCENT LIFE IN JEOPARDY, JUST TO STOP *ME*?

WHAT KIND OF *INHUMAN MONSTER* ARE YOU?!?!

IT'S A TOUCH *MACHIAVELLIAN*, I ADMIT. BUT MY *END* JUSTIFIES MY *MEANS*.

NOW, HEAR ME OUT.

8

YOU'VE MADE QUITE A *NAME* FOR YOURSELF SINCE YOU WENT PUBLIC, SUPERMAN.

THERE'S NO DOUBT IN ANYONE'S MIND THAT YOU'RE THE NUMBER ONE DEFENDER OF THIS *PLANET* OF OURS.

BUT DEFENDING A PLANET AND CLEANING UP A CITY ARE TWO VERY DIFFERENT THINGS.

YOU'VE GOT THE *UNDERWORLD* PRETTY MUCH COWED IN *METROPOLIS*, SUPERMAN.

BUT GOTHAM CITY ISN'T YOUR TURF. IT REQUIRES A *DIFFERENT APPROACH.*

"CASE IN POINT...

TIMEX

"SIX DAYS AGO, MR. HENRY JARRELL OPENED HIS DONNER AVENUE JEWELRY SHOP AT 7:15 A.M., AS USUAL.

"ONLY HE VERY QUICKLY DISCOVERED THINGS WERE NOT AS USUAL.

"DURING THE NIGHT, MR. JARRELL'S LITTLE SHOP HAD BEEN *BURGLARIZED.*

"ALL HIS PRECIOUS STONES HAD BEEN REMOVED.

"IN THEIR PLACES HE FOUND AN ODD ASSORTMENT OF LITTLE METAL *TRINKETS.*

"THEY ALL LOOKED *HARMLESS* ENOUGH. THEY WOULD HAVE BEEN, TOO, IF HE *HADN'T TOUCHED* ONE OF THEM.

"THE *BLAST* KNOCKED OUT WINDOWS ALL DOWN THE STREET.

"IT TOOK THE CORONER'S MEN TWO DAYS TO FIND ALL THE PIECES OF HENRY JARRELL."

9

"OVER THE NEXT FIVE DAYS, THAT PARTICULAR SIGNATURE TURNED UP ON THREE ADDITIONAL HEISTS.

"EACH TIME WITH A SPECIAL, UNIQUE TWIST.

"CHANCELLOR'S DIAMOND EXCHANGE: A POISON GAS BOMB WAS LEFT IN PLACE OF THE REGENCY EMERALD.

"THREE DEAD.

"WILLAKKER'S RARE STONES AND GEMS:

"A GADGET THAT SQUIRTED ACID.

"TWO DEAD. ONE HORRIBLY DISFIGURED.

"TANNEBAUM'S ANTIQUES AND COLLECTABLES:

"TO REPLACE A PRICELESS PLATINUM CHESS-SET, A LITTLE STEEL ROOK THAT FIRED RAZOR-EDGED BLADES.

"THREE DEAD. TWO HOSPITALIZED.

"AN HOUR AGO MY INVESTIGATIONS LED ME TO A MAN NAMED BULL CARTER.

"I WAS AFTER HIM WHEN YOU INTERRUPTED."

BULL IS A SMALL-TIME HOOD. MUSCLE FOR HIRE.

AND EVERY INDICATION WAS THAT HE'D BEEN HIRED BY THE "LADY" BEHIND THESE CRIMES.

A PARTICULARLY *FATAL* FEMME WHO CALLS HERSELF...

"...MAGPIE!"

FOOL!!

STUPID, BLITHERING IDIOT!!

YOU HAD THE PERFECT OPPORTUNITY TO *MISLEAD* THE BATMAN, AND YOU *BLEW IT!!*

B-BUT... BUT, BOSS...!

DON'T "*BUT, BOSS*" ME!! THE COPS IN THIS TOWN ARE EITHER DEAD FROM THE NECK UP OR TOO BUSY LINING THEIR OWN POCKETS TO BOTHER US.

THE BATMAN IS THE *ONLY THING* WE HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT, AND IF YOU'D USED THE *TINIEST FRACTION* OF YOUR PEA-SIZED *BRAIN*, YOU COULD HAVE SENT HIM CHASING DOWN BLIND ALLEYS FOR A MONTH!!

GEEZ, BOSS... IF TH' BATMAN IS THAT CLOSE, MAYBE WE SHOULD *LIE LOW* FOR A WEEK OR TWO, HUH?

"*LIE LOW*"?

DON'T BE *RIDICULOUS*, CARLING. MCDOWELL BRYAN'S COLLECTION OF *FABERGÉ EGGS* WILL BE IN GOTHAM CITY ONLY ANOTHER TWELVE HOURS.

AND THEY'RE SUCH *PRETTY THINGS*. SUCH PRETTY, *SPARKLING* THINGS.

I *MUST* HAVE THEM. I MUST HAVE *ALL* THE PRETTY, SHINY THINGS.

MUST...

...HAVE...

UHRRR...

E-ENOUGH OF *THAT.*

WE STILL NEED TO DECIDE WHAT TO DO ABOUT *YOU*, BULL.

D...DO?

WELL, YES, YOU NAUGHTY, *NAUGHTY* BOY.

YOU LET ME DOWN, DIDN'T YOU? YOU *SCREWED UP!*

WE HAVE TO *DO* SOMETHING ABOUT THAT.

WE HAVE TO...

SNIK!

PUNISH YOU!!!

FIRST, A FAST-ACTING *PARALYSIS VENOM...*

OW!

NOW... LET'S SEE WHAT WE HAVE FOR YOU TODAY...

AH... YES! THE VERY THING!

THERE WE GO!

OH, NO, BOSS!

NOT "*HAPPY BIRTHDAY!*"

NOT "HAPPY BIRTHDAY!"

...NOW, WITHOUT THE INFORMATION I'D HOPED TO GET FROM BULL, I'M BACK TO SQUARE...

NOT AT ALL.

AM I *BORING* YOU?

BUT I JUST HEARD AN *EXPLOSION*, AND NOW, WHAT SOUNDS LIKE A WOMAN... *LAUGHING*...

MAGPIE!

SHE'S STRUCK AGAIN!

COME ON, MAN! LET'S SEE HOW *GOOD* THOSE POWERS OF YOURS *REALLY ARE!*

LEAD ME TO HER!!

VERY WELL. BUT YOU AND I ARE NOT *FINISHED YET*, BATMAN.

ONE MINUTE LATER...

THERE! THE SOUND WAS COMING FROM *THAT* BUILDING.

THE OLD *GOTHAM MUSEUM OF ANTIQUITIES!* BUT THAT'S BEEN *DERELICT* FOR YEARS.

THERE'S NOTHING THERE TO STEAL... UNLESS ...MAYBE SHE'S NOT *ROBBING* THE PLACE...

13

HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA!!!

POOR BULL! NOW HE'LL NEVER GET AHEAD IN THE WORLD!!

B-BOSS! I JUST CHECKED TH' ROOFTOP SCANNING CAMERAS! TH' *BATMAN'S HERE!*

AND SOME *FLYIN' GUY* WITH A BIG "S" ON HIS CHEST!

"S"? "S"?

THE *LETTER S?* AS IN "SEYMOUR"?

AS IN *SUPERMAN,* BIRD-GIRL.

AND YOU'VE JUST ADDED THE LAST *STATISTIC* TO YOUR BODY COUNT!

14

CARLING! GRUENBACH!! DON'T JUST STAND THERE!!

BLAST HIM!!

W-WILL DO, BOSS!

ARE YOU KIDDING?? THAT GUY JUST PUNCHED THROUGH A STONE WALL!!

I'M GETTIN' OUTTA HERE!!

BLAM BLAM!

BLAM! BLAM

--NNGH

CRUNK

NICE WORK, SUPERMAN.

HERE'S THE OTHER ONE.

D-DON'T HURT ME! PLEASE DON'T HURT ME!!

15

AND NOW, MAGPIE, IT'S TIME YOU AND I HAD A LITTLE *CHAT.*

NO, BATMAN.

YOU'VE ONLY WON A *BATTLE.*

YOU'VE NOT EVEN COME *CLOSE* TO WINNING THE *WAR!!*

TINK

T.T.F.N., SUPER-SAPS!!

THAT GAS...!

IT'S LIKE *ACID!*

IT'S *EATING* EVERYTHING IT TOUCHES!

MAGPIE IS ESCAPING!

AND I CAN'T GO AFTER HER *AND* PROTECT THE OTHERS, BECAUSE I CAN'T *TOUCH* THE BATMAN!

I'LL HAVE TO LET MAGPIE GO, FOR NOW...

...WHILE I *INHALE* ALL THE GAS!

THEN FIND...

...A SAFE PLACE...

16

...TO *DISPOSE* OF IT!

THERE!

IN THE FRIGID *VACUUM* OF SPACE, THE GAS IS INSTANTLY FROZEN INTO CRYSTALS OF *ICE*. AND MY *MICROSCOPIC VISION* SHOWS THAT THE FREEZING PROCESS HAS CAUSED A *CHEMICAL CHANGE*...

THE STUFF IS NO LONGER A DANGEROUS SOLVENT. *NOW*, SINCE THAT LITTLE STUNT HAS ALSO EXHAUSTED THE *AIR* IN MY LUNGS, I'D BETTER GET BACK INSIDE EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE...

...AND GET BACK TO THE UNFINISHED BUSINESS IN GOTHAM CITY.

HM. BATMAN'S LEFT MAGPIE'S GOONS TRUSSED UP AT HER HIDEOUT, BUT WHERE IS *HE*?

A QUICK SCAN WITH MY *TELESCOPIC VISION* SHOULD...

AH! THERE HE IS.

NOT THINKING OF *LEAVING*, WERE YOU, FRIEND?

SUPERMAN!

NO, I WASN'T PLANNING ON GOING ANYWHERE, JUST *YET.*

BUT I *DID* WANT TO GET A LOOK AT THE SHARDS OF GLASS FROM MAGPIE'S GAS VIAL BEFORE THEY WERE *CONTAMINATED* BY EXTRANEOUS DUST PARTICLES.

GOTHAM GNN-550

AS YOU CAN SEE, I HAVE A PORTABLE *CRIME-LAB*, HERE IN THE TRUNK OF MY AUTOMOBILE.

ONE OF THE MOST *ADVANCED* SUCH LABS IN THE STATE.

NOW, LET'S SEE WHAT WE'VE GOT HERE, SHALL WE?

SINCE THAT VIAL WAS INSIDE MAGPIE'S BAG OF TRICKS, I THINK WE'RE SAFE IN ASSUMING IT'S BEEN GOING WHEREVER SHE'S GONE. IT COULD HAVE PICKED UP ALMOST *ANYTHING.*

AH HA! VERY GOOD! A TINY PIECE OF *THREAD.* JUST THE BAREST STRAND, NOT MORE THAN A SIXTEENTH OF AN INCH, BUT ENOUGH FOR *ANALYSIS.*

HMMM...

NOW, ISN'T *THAT* INTERESTING? UNLESS THE *SPECTROMETER* IS COMPLETELY OFF-- AND IT *ISN'T*--

--THIS LITTLE LENGTH OF FIBRE IS AT LEAST *FIVE THOUSAND YEARS OLD!*

"*FIVE...?!?*" BUT HOW CAN THAT *BE?*

SURELY MAGPIE HERSELF CAN'T BE THAT OLD...?

DOESN'T SEEM TOO LIKELY, DOES IT?

BUT IT *IS* EXACTLY THE *CLUE* I WAS AFTER. THERE'S ONLY *ONE PLACE* IN GOTHAM CITY WHERE SHE'D COME INTO CONTACT WITH FIVE-THOUSAND-YEAR-OLD CLOTH OF PRECISELY *THAT* VARIETY.

FOLLOW ME!

18

BLAST THEM!

BLAST THEM!

BLAST THEM!!

BLAST THEM!!!

THE WEEKS, THE *MONTHS* I SPENT SETTING UP MY *HEADQUARTERS*! RECRUITING *MUSCLE*. GETTING EVERYTHING *PERFECT*.

TO HAVE IT ALL *RUINED* BY THOSE SUPER-POWERED *BUSY BODIES*!!!

IT'S NOT AS IF I'VE COMMITTED ANY *CRIME*! I ONLY TOOK THE PRETTY, BRIGHT THINGS THAT WERE RIGHTFULLY *MINE*!

AND I DIDN'T *STEAL* THEM, EITHER. I *TRADED*. I LEFT OTHER THINGS IN THEIR PLACE.

AND IF THEY WERE *DEADLY* THINGS...WELL, WHY NOT? THOSE PEOPLE HAD TO BE *PUNISHED* FOR LOCKING AWAY THE PRETTY, BRIGHT THINGS THAT BELONGED TO *ME*!

AND NOW!!! NOW IT MAY BE *MORE* MONTHS BEFORE I HAVE SUCH A CLEAR SHOT AT THOSE FABERGÉ EGGS!

MORE LIKE *YEARS*, MARGARET.

WHO...??

YOU?!?

BUT...BUT YOU'RE *DEAD*!!!

NO, MARGARET, I'M VERY MUCH ALIVE. ALIVE ENOUGH TO HAVE DEDUCED WHERE YOU PROBABLY *WORK*...

AND ALIVE ENOUGH TO CHECK THE *EMPLOYEE RECORDS* OF THIS MUSEUM, AND FIND THE NAME *MARGARET PYE*!

MY WIG!!

19

GIVE IT TO ME! GIVE IT TO ME!!

IT'S NOT YOURS! IT'S MINE!

IT'S MINE! IT'S MINE! YOU CAN'T...

...HAVE...

...CAN'T...

...HAVE...

...THE PRETTY THINGS...

...CAN'T HAVE THE PRETTY...

...PRETTY...

...PRETTY...

STRANGE... TO SEE HER *BREAK DOWN* LIKE THAT...

I...CAN'T HELP BUT FEEL *SORRY* FOR HER.

YOU THINK I DON'T?

SHE'S NOT A REAL *CRIMINAL*. NOT LIKE THE KIND OF *GUTTER-SLIME* I'VE DEDICATED MYSELF TO *DESTROYING*.

SHE'S JUST A FRAIL, HUMAN PSYCHE. AN UNBALANCED *ID* THAT GOT PUSHED TOO FAR. YOU SAW THE *PSYCHOLOGICAL PROFILE* IN HER RECORD.

A LITTLE GIRL WHO LOVED PRETTY THINGS, A TRIFLE TOO MUCH, PERHAPS. WHO WAS TAUNTED AND CALLED "*MAGPIE*" BECAUSE OF IT.

WHO EDUCATED HERSELF, BECAME *CURATOR* OF ONE OF THE NATION'S LEADING MUSEUMS...

...AND FOUND HERSELF HAVING TO WATCH OVER PRETTY THINGS SHE COULD NEVER *POSSESS*.

YES... I FEEL SORRY FOR HER, SUPERMAN.

BUT I FEEL *MORE* SORRY FOR HER *VICTIMS*.

20

TWENTY MINUTES LATER...

THE POLICE RESPONDED QUICKLY ENOUGH TO YOUR *ANONYMOUS* CALL, BATMAN.

THERE SHE GOES, UNDER CUSTODY.

IF GOTHAM IS *LUCKY*, THEY'LL PUT HER IN A NICE, SAFE *PADDED CELL* OUT AT ARKHAM ASYLUM.

AND IF WE'RE *UNLUCKY*, SHE'LL FIND HERSELF A HOTSHOT LEGAL EAGLE, AND BE BACK ON THE STREETS BEFORE YOU'RE HALFWAY HOME TO METROPOLIS.

YOU SOUND *BITTER*, BATMAN. I GUESS YOU'VE GOT *REASON*.

YOUR GOTHAM *IS* DIFFERENT FROM MY TOWN.

YES. AND MAGPIE IS JUST THE *TIP* OF THE GARBAGE PILE, SUPERMAN. A GARBAGE PILE THAT REACHES FROM THE LOWEST *SEWERS*...

...TO THE HIGHEST OFFICES OF *CITY HALL*.

AND THAT'S WHY YOU ACT *OUTSIDE* THE LAW.

I DON'T LIKE *VIGILANTES*, BATMAN, EVEN THOUGH I'VE BEEN CALLED ONE MYSELF.

BUT THERE *IS* A JOB THAT NEEDS DOING, HERE IN GOTHAM. AND *YOU* SEEM WELL SUITED TO THE TASK OF *DOING IT*.

THEN, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, I HAVEN'T *SLEPT* IN FOUR DAYS. IF I'M TO BE IN ANY KIND OF SHAPE TO CONTINUE MY PRIVATE *WAR*...

NOT SO FAST, BATMAN.

WE STILL HAVE THE MATTER OF AN INNOCENT LIFE YOU'VE PLACED IN JEOPARDY.

21

OH, YES. MY *BOMB.*

HERE YOU GO, SUPERMAN. I HAD IT TUCKED INSIDE MY *UTILITY BELT* ALL THE TIME.

YOU...??? YOU MEAN, IT WAS *YOUR OWN LIFE* YOU WERE RISKING?

WHY?!?

BECAUSE I KNEW MY PLAN WAS THE ONLY WAY I COULD *STOP* YOU, SUPERMAN.

I ALSO KNEW THAT WITH YOUR GREAT POWERS, YOU'D PROBABLY BE ABLE TO TELL IF I WERE *LYING.*

THUS...

WELL, I STILL WON'T SAY I FULLY APPROVE OF YOUR METHODS, BATMAN...

...AND I'M GOING TO BE KEEPING AN EYE ON YOU, TO MAKE CERTAIN YOU DON'T *BLOW IT* FOR THE REST OF US...

BUT... *GOOD LUCK.*

THE SAME TO YOU, SUPERMAN.

A REMARKABLE MAN, ALL THINGS CONSIDERED. WHO KNOWS? IN A DIFFERENT REALITY, I MIGHT HAVE CALLED HIM "*FRIEND.*"

22

A 6 PART MINI-SERIES BY BYRNE & GIORDANO

LEX LUTHOR STRIKES!

No. 4

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

THE MAN OF STEEL™

BOOK FOUR

SUPERMAN
ENEMY MINE...
LOIS! YOU'RE SO EARLY! I HAVEN'T EVEN SHAVED YET!
SO I SEE.
BUT MY RIDE PICKED ME UP SOONER THAN I'D EXPECTED, AND SINCE YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE COMING WITH ME...
...HERE I AM.
SO, ARE YOU GOING TO LET ME IN?

OH, BY ALL MEANS, DO COME IN.

YOU LOOK *FANTASTIC!* THAT'S *SOME* DRESS!

MMM. A *LOANER* FROM OUR *HOST.*

SO *THIS* IS YOUR APARTMENT, *KENT?*

VERY NICE.

ALMOST *SPARTAN.*

AND VERY *TIDY.*

EVERY OTHER *BACHELOR* I'VE EVER KNOWN HAS LIVED IN A CROSS BETWEEN A PIG-STY AND A BOMB-SITE.

NOT YOU, THOUGH.

I GUESS I SHOULD HAVE EXPECTED AS MUCH FROM A MAN WHOSE STORIES NEVER HAVE *TYPOS.*

WELL, I'M REALLY NOT *HERE* ALL THAT MUCH, BETWEEN MY TIME AT THE *DAILY PLANET,* AND MY OTHER INTERESTS.

"OTHER INTERESTS"?

WITH ALL THE *HOT STORIES* YOU'VE TURNED IN OVER THE LAST YEAR AND A HALF...

...I'M SURPRISED TO HEAR YOU HAVE TIME FOR *ANYTHING* THAT ISN'T STRICTLY *JOB RELATED.*

?

THIS IS *YOU?*

WHY, YES.

I PLAYED A LITTLE *FOOTBALL* IN HIGH SCHOOL.

SMALLVILLE

KIND OF LOST INTEREST, OVER THE YEARS.

OF COURSE. I STILL TRY TO KEEP IN *SHAPE...*

MMM. YOU *SUCCEED.*

AND THESE ARE YOUR *PARENTS?* THEY LOOK LIKE A VERY NICE COUPLE.

HOW DID THEY WIND UP WITH A SON WHO'S SUCH A *SWINE?*

2

OOH-HH, LOIS! YOU'RE NOT GOING TO START IN ON *THAT* AGAIN, ARE YOU? IT'S BEEN *EIGHTEEN MONTHS!*

SEVENTEEN MONTHS, TWO WEEKS, FOUR DAYS AND AN ODD NUMBER OF HOURS, AND DON'T YOU FORGET IT, KENT.

METR

MUS
OF
MOD

BUT, LOIS, YOU *KNOW* I DIDN'T *SCOOP* YOU ON THE FIRST *SUPERMAN* STORY OUT OF *SPITE* OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT. WHY, I HADN'T EVEN *MET* YOU THEN!

AND YOU THINK THAT *MAKES* IT *EASIER*, YOU BIG *DOPE*? I COULD *DEAL* WITH IT, *MAYBE*, IF WE'D BEEN CHASING THE SAME STORY *ALL ALONG*. EVERY GOOD REPORTER LIVES WITH *THAT!*

BUT TO HAVE YOU WALTZ IN OFF THE STREET WITH *NO EXPERIENCE* AND THE *STORY OF THE CENTURY...!!*

OH-HHH-- GO SCRAPE YOUR FACE. I DON'T WANT TO *DISCUSS* IT ANY FURTHER.

ALL RIGHT. I'LL BE ABOUT TEN *MINUTES*.

POOR LOIS! SHE REALLY ISN'T *EVER* GOING TO *FORGIVE* ME FOR TURNING IN THE FIRST EXCLUSIVE ON SUPERMAN.

BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN I HAVE TO GIVE UP TRYING TO MAKE PEACE WITH HER.

SHE'S FAR TOO ATTRACTIVE, FAR TOO *VIVACIOUS* FOR ME TO LET US STAY "*ENEMIES.*"

THERE. NOW, WHILE MY ELECTRIC RAZOR PROVIDES THE NECESSARY *SOUND EFFECTS...*

WHIRRRRRR

3

...I CAN SET ABOUT THE RATHER *ELABORATE* PROCEDURE I HAVE TO GO THROUGH TO SHAVE MY *SUPER-TOUGH* BEARD.

USING A PIECE OF CURVED, REFLECTIVE *METAL* FROM THE *ROCKET* MA AND PA KENT FOUND ME IN...

...I DIRECT A SLENDER BEAM OF MY "*HEAT-VISION...*"

...SO THAT IT BOUNCES BACK WITH *PINPOINT* ACCURACY...

...AND CAREFULLY SHEARS OFF THE EXPOSED WHISKERS!

LUCKILY, JUST AS A NORMAL MAN'S FACE IS *TOUGHENED* BY THE DAILY ROUTINE OF SHAVING, MY OWN CHEEKS HAVE BECOME INCREASINGLY *RESISTANT* TO THE HEAT-BEAM.

THERE'S VERY LITTLE LIKELIHOOD OF CUTTING OR BURNING MY FACE.

10 MINUTES LATER...

READY TO GO, LOIS?

WHENEVER YOU LIKE, KENT.

FUNNY THING, THOUGH. I'M *SURPRISED* YOU'VE BEEN ABLE TO KEEP UP SUCH A *TERRIFIC* PHYSIQUE WITH THOSE *LIGHT* WEIGHTS.

OOPS! I HADN'T *THOUGHT* OF THAT. I'VE GONE TO GREAT LENGTHS TO PROVIDE EXPLANATIONS OF HOW *CLARK KENT* CAN HAVE A BUILD ALMOST AS GOOD AS *SUPERMAN'S*.

THEY'RE HARDLY HEAVIER THAN THE ONES *I* USE.

4

BUT WITH MY *SUPER-STRENGTH*, IT'S HARD FOR ME TO BE SURE OF THE WEIGHT OF SOMETHING AS SMALL AS A DUMBBELL.

WELL, ER, THOSE ARE *OLD* WEIGHTS AND I... ER, LOIS? WHERE ARE YOU GOING? THE ELEVATOR IS OVER *HERE*...

I KNOW. BUT-- THE *STAIRS* TO THE ROOF ARE DOWN THIS WAY.

THE... ROOF? BUT-- WHY DO YOU WANT TO GO TO THE ROOF?

BECAUSE THAT'S WHERE OUR *RIDE* IS WAITING, KENT.

OUR...??

OMIGOSH!!

YOU DON'T MEAN TO TELL ME THAT HELICOPTER'S BEEN SITTING UP HERE ALL THIS TIME?

THIS ROOF WASN'T *BUILT* TO TAKE THAT KIND OF *STRESS*!

LEXCORP

LUTHOR 367

HURRY ALONG, FOLKS. *MR. L.* DOESN'T LIKE BEING KEPT WAITING!

IN FACT, SURELY SOMETHING LIKE THIS IS *ILLEGAL*?

NO DOUBT.

AND I *DID* TRY TO TALK THE PILOT OUT OF LANDING HERE.

BUT YOU'VE LIVED IN *METROPOLIS* LONG ENOUGH TO KNOW ANYTHING WITH THE NAME "*LUTHOR*" ON IT IS PRETTY MUCH *ABOVE* THE LAW!

5

AND YOU *APPROVE* OF THAT, LOIS?

NO. BUT IT DOESN'T DO MUCH GOOD TO *DISAPPROVE*. LEX LUTHOR *OWNS* THIS TOWN, KENT.

LEXCORP HAS AN INTEREST IN VIRTUALLY EVERY BUSINESS BASED IN METROPOLIS.

LEX HIMSELF IS THE SECOND OR THIRD *RICHEST MAN* IN THE WORLD. AND EASILY ONE OF THE MOST *POWERFUL*.

BUT DESPITE HIS OCCASIONAL FLAUNTING OF THE RULES, NO ONE'S BEEN ABLE TO CONNECT HIS NAME WITH ANYTHING EVEN *REMOTELY* SHADY. AND BELIEVE ME, NO ONE'S DUG DEEPER THAN *I* HAVE.

IN FACT, OUTSIDE HIS BUSINESS INTERESTS, ALL YOU CAN FIND ARE LUTHOR'S *GOOD WORKS*: CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS, FUNDING TO UNIVERSITIES ALL OVER AMERICA...

YOU DON'T THINK YOUR VIEW-POINT MIGHT BE *COLORED* BY YOUR *RELATIONSHIP* WITH HIM, LOIS?

RELATIONSHIP, KENT?

WELL, EVERYONE IN METROPOLIS KNOWS LOIS LANE AND LEX LUTHOR ARE A PRETTY *HOT* ITEM!

6

"HOT ITEM"?

ARE YOU *SERIOUS*, KENT? AND HERE I THOUGHT YOU HAD THE MAKINGS OF A *GOOD* REPORTER!

A GOOD REPORTER KEEPS HIS *EYES* AND *EARS* OPEN, LOIS. AND LEX LUTHOR HAS TAKEN A--SHALL WE SAY-- A *SPECIAL INTEREST* IN YOU FOR SOME TIME NOW.

HE'S A *COLLECTOR*, KENT. HE WANTS TO OWN AT LEAST *ONE* OF EVERYTHING IN THE WORLD.

HE'S FASCINATED BY ME BECAUSE I'M NOT INTERESTED IN BECOMING A PART OF HIS COLLECTION. AND I'VE *TOLD* HIM SO.

MISS LANE? MR. KENT? WOULD YOU COME WITH ME, PLEASE? MR. L IS WAITING.

AND SO...

THIS IS REALLY QUITE THE SHIP, ISN'T IT? I DOUBT THE ROYAL YACHT *BRITTANIA* IS MUCH BIGGER.

QUITE A BIT *SMALLER*, ACTUALLY, MR. KENT. MR. L LIKES TO OWN THE *BIGGEST* OF EVERYTHING.

AND SHE'S SO *STEADY!* WHY, I'D HARDLY KNOW WE'RE ABOARD A SHIP AT ALL. ESPECIALLY ONE MAKING FULL STEAM FOR THE OPEN SEA.

SPECIAL STABILIZERS, SIR.

MR. L HAS THE *SEA QUEEN* BUILT TO WITHSTAND THE ROUGHEST SEAS. SHE'LL RIDE SMOOTHLY THROUGH ANYTHING THIS SIDE OF A FULL *HURRICANE*.

NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, THERE ARE OTHER ARRIVING GUESTS I MUST MEET.

WELL, HIS *STAFF* SURE SEEMS FRIENDLY ENOUGH. BUT WHERE'S THE *BIG MAN* HIMSELF?

RIGHT HERE, MR. KENT.

7

SO SORRY TO HAVE KEPT YOU WAITING. A LAST-MINUTE *COMMUNICATION* FROM MY OIL-FIELDS IN VENEZUELA.

LOIS, DARLING! SO VERY GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN. IT WAS... *UNFORTUNATE* WE MISSED GETTING TOGETHER BEFORE I LEFT FOR SOUTH AMERICA LAST YEAR.

YES...WELL, YOU KNOW HOW IT IS, LEX. I HAD *OTHER THINGS* OCCUPYING MY TIME.

AH, YES. THIS SO-CALLED "*SUPERMAN.*" BUT AS I UNDERSTAND IT, IT WAS *YOU* WHO FINALLY TRACKED DOWN THAT STORY, KENT.

MY HEARTIEST *CONGRATULATIONS*, SIR!

ER--THANK YOU, MR. LUTHOR.

BUT IT WAS *NOTHING*. REALLY. JUST *LUCK*.

TO *YOU*, PERHAPS. OTHERS MIGHT DISAGREE. BUT I UNDERSTAND YOU EVEN WENT SO FAR AS TO *DECLINE* THE METROPOLIS NEWSPAPER GUILD'S *SPECIAL AWARD OF EXCELLENCE* FOR THE STORY.

IT-- DIDN'T SEEM *FAIR* TO ACCEPT IT, SIR. AFTER ALL, TURNING IN THAT STORY GOT ME MY JOB AT THE *PLANET*. THAT SEEMED REWARD ENOUGH.

REMARKABLE!!

MM. BUT NOW YOU'RE HERE AS LOIS'S *GUEST*, ASSIGNED BY YOUR BOSS TO COVER THIS LITTLE SORIÉE OF MINE.

I'M SURPRISED MY OLD FRIEND *PERRY WHITE* DIDN'T COME HIMSELF, IN YOUR PLACE.

OH, COME ON, LEX. PERRY DOESN'T MUCH CARE FOR THE IDEA OF LIVING IN THE SAME *SOLAR SYSTEM* WITH YOU. YOU KNOW THAT.

HE'D *NEVER* COME TO ONE OF YOUR PARTIES. NOT EVEN IN HIS OFFICIAL CAPACITY AS *MANAGING EDITOR* OF THE *DAILY PLANET*.

EXCUSE ME, MR. L. YOU WANTED TO BE *INFORMED* WHEN MAYOR BERKOWITZ AND HIS GUESTS ARRIVED.

AH, YES.

THANK YOU, YVETTE.

AND NOW, IF YOU'D JUST EXCUSE US FOR A FEW MOMENTS, KENT, I'D LIKE A FEW WORDS IN PRIVATE WITH LOIS.

ER-- YES, OF COURSE. I'LL BE RIGHT OUT-SIDE, LOIS.

HE SEEMS A TRIFLE *UNSURE* OF HIMSELF. I'M AMAZED HE'S MADE SUCH A *MARK* AT THE *PLANET*.

NOT QUITE "AS ALWAYS," LEX. I DON'T *USUALLY* PARADE AROUND IN A FIVE-THOUSAND-DOLLAR *CHAMPLAYNE ORIGINAL*!

BUT YOU, LOIS! YOU LOOK ABSOLUTELY *SPLENDID*, AS ALWAYS.

IT COST ME A *HUNDRED BUCKS* TO GET A HAIR-DO THAT LIVED *UP* TO THIS LITTLE *FROCK*!

AH, THEN YOU *LIKE* MY LITTLE *PRESENT*. I'M SO GLAD. WHEN I SAW IT IN *PARIS* I JUST KNEW IT WAS *YOU*!

"*PRESENT*"??

NOW WAIT A MINUTE! YOUR *NOTE* SAID THIS WAS JUST FOR THE PARTY TONIGHT!

YOU *KNOW* I'D HAVE RETURNED IT *UNWORN* IF I'D THOUGHT IT WAS MEANT AS A *GIFT*!!

OH, COME NOW, LOIS! WHAT ON EARTH WOULD I DO WITH IT? IT'S NOT EVEN MY COLOR.

DON'T GET CUTE, LUTHOR. I'VE TOLD YOU I WON'T ACCEPT THESE LAVISH GIFTS OF YOURS. SENDING ME THIS DRESS LIKE THAT WAS JUST PLAIN DECEITFUL!!

YOU KNOW ALMOST ANY WOMAN WOULD KILL TO WEAR THIS FOR THE EVENING!

THEN WHY NOT ACCEPT IT, LOIS DARLING? YOU KNOW FULL WELL HOW MUCH I DESIRE YOU. GIVE ME THE CHANCE, AND I COULD MAKE YOU THE HAPPIEST WOMAN IN THE WORLD.

BY MAKING ME WIFE NUMBER SEVEN? OR IS IT EIGHT? IT'S SO HARD TO KEEP TRACK OF YOUR EXPLOITS, LEX.

YOU DO TEND TO MAKE HENRY THE EIGHTH LOOK LIKE A CHOIRBOY.

IS THAT IT THEN, LOIS? YOU REJECT MY ATTENTIONS BECAUSE I HAVE BEEN UNLUCKY IN LOVE?

"UNLUCKY...?"

O-OHHH! I HAVE HAD ENOUGH OF THIS!

KENT!!

YES, LOIS?

LEND ME YOUR JACKET, KENT.

MY...?

ER, SURE, LOIS. BUT WHAT FOR?

I'M RETURNING MR. LUTHOR'S GIFT, KENT.

NOW JUST STAND THERE AND BE AS WIDE AS YOU KNOW HOW.

AND EYES FRONT, MISTER!

LOIS, THIS IS REALLY QUITE...

SAVE IT, LEX.

C'MON, KENT. THE PARTY'S OVER. I NEED AN ESCORT HOME, AND YOU'RE ELECTED!

OH, AND BY THE WAY, LEX--IF YOU *REALLY* WANT SOMEONE TO SPEND YOUR MONEY ON, I SUGGEST A GOOD *BARBER*..

YOU'RE STARTING TO LOOK LIKE *FRED MERTZ!*

ER... NOW, LOIS, THAT CLOSING SHOT WAS KIND OF A *LOW BLOW*, DON'T YOU THINK?

DON'T *YOU* START UP WITH ME, KENT. I'VE BEEN LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS BASH FOR *THREE MONTHS!* FABULOUS GOWN! FABULOUS PEOPLE! FABULOUS FOOD!

AND NOW THAT *JERK* HAS GONE AND SPOILED IT ALL. IT JUST MAKES ME *BOIL!*

NOTHING COULD POSSIBLY MAKE THIS EVENING ANY *WORSE!!*

GUESS AGAIN, *SEÑORITA!*

LOIS, GET BACK!

KENT!

STAY RIGHT WHERE YOU ARE, *GRINGO.*

THIS SHIP AND ITS PASSENGERS ARE NOW OUR *HOSTAGES!*

H-HOW DID HE GET IN *FRONT* OF ME? I'VE NEVER SEEN *ANYONE* MOVE SO *FAST!!*

NOW, JUST A MINU--

UNGH!!

CRAK!

I WARNED YOU, ESTUPIDO!

CLARK!!

YOU KEEP YOUR MOUTH SHUT, HERMANITA.*

DIEGO! CARLOS! FEED THE BIG GRINGO TO THE FISHES!!

OW!

*Little sister.

HERE YOU GO, LITTLE FEESH!

HAVE A GOOD DINNER!

CLARK! OH MY GOD!

OH MY GOD!

ALL RIGHT, MOVE ALONG. GET UP FRONT WITH THE OTHERS.

I SAID MOVE!

YOU WON'T GET AWAY WITH THIS, CREEPS! YOU'VE PICKED THE WRONG TOWN TO PLAY THIS KIND OF GAME IN!

12

DON'T MAKE ME *LAUGH*. THE FIRST SIGN OF POLICE, WE START *WASTING* YOU HOSTAGES.

NOW GET OVER THERE!

GOOD EVENING, MR. MAYOR.

NOT QUITE THE *NIGHT OUT* WE'D ALL EXPECTED, *HMM*?

NOT AT ALL, MISS LANE. I'M... *SORRY* ABOUT MR. KENT. WE ALL *SAW* WHAT HAPPENED, BUT THERE WAS *NOTHING* WE COULD DO.

AND... WHERE THE DEVIL IS LEX LUTHOR?

PERFECT. *PERFECT*...

OKAY, *AMERICANOS*, WE ARE GOING TO *HOLD* YOU HERE UNTIL YOUR GOVERNMENT...

HUH?!?

THE *DECK*! IT'S *TILTING*!!

NOT JUST THE DECK!!

SEA QUEEN METROPOLIS

MADRE DE DIOS!!!

THE WHOLE *BOAT* IS LIFTING INTO THE *AIR*!!!

13

THE JIG IS UP, CREEPS!

I'LL TAKE THAT GUN NOW!

AAOW!!

CHUK!

AND HERE'S A LITTLE *REMEMBRANCE* FROM CLARK KENT!!

MR. MAYOR! LOOK OVER THE SIDE! CAN YOU *SEE?*

IS IT *HIM?*

I CAN'T TELL FROM THIS ANGLE, MISS LANE, BUT...

BRRR

AAAAP

PF

"*HOW COULD IT BE ANYONE ELSE?*"

THIS IS *EASIER* THAN I EXPECTED!

ODD, THAT THINGS SEEM TO WEIGH *LESS* WHEN I'M FLYING THAN THEY DO WHEN I'M ON THE GROUND...

HMM...SOUNDS LIKE LOIS IS LEADING A *REVOLT* AGAINST THOSE GUN-BRAVE *PUNKS.*

I REALLY HATED TO GIVE HER THE *SCARE* I DID...

...BUT I HAD TO FIND A QUICK WAY TO CHANGE FROM *CLARK KENT.*

AND GETTING *THROWN OVERBOARD* SEEMED THE MOST CONVENIENT. LUCKY THESE GOONS WERE SO *PREDICTABLE.*

NOW I'LL JUST TRANSPORT THE VESSEL TO HER *DESTINATION...*

...LEX LUTHOR'S PRIVATE ISLAND SHANGRI-LA!

I'LL JUST SET 'ER DOWN *GENTLY* IN THE HARBOR...

...AND FINISH MOPPING UP THESE *VERMIN* BEFORE ANYONE *REALLY* GETS HURT!

WELL WELL! LOIS SEEMS TO HAVE THINGS NICELY IN HAND.

I GUESS I SHOULDN'T BE *SURPRISED* BY HER *SKILL* WITH THAT WEAPON.

BEING AN *ARMY BRAT*, SHE WAS ALMOST BOUND TO HAVE PICKED UP SOME TRICKS.

BUT SHE'S LET HER GUARD DOWN A LITTLE TOO *SOON*.

CAREFUL, LOIS. YOU'RE NOT *DONE* YET!

SUPERMAN!

DIOS!!

AND NOW...

KRNK

RLNK

KNKL

KRRK

I'D THINK ABOUT *LETTING GO*, IF I WERE YOU.

TKLK

SUPERMAN! YOU WERE *FANTASTIC!*

WELL...

YOU DIDN'T DO TOO *BADLY* YOURSELF, LOIS.

BUT *NONE* OF US COULD HAVE DONE *ANYTHING* WITHOUT YOUR TIMELY INTERVENTION, SUPERMAN.

YOUR MAGNIFICENT *DISTRACTION* AFFORDED MISS LANE THE OPPORTUNITY TO *ACT!*

THANK YOU, MR. MAYOR.

I'M *PLEASED* TO HAVE BEEN OF *HELP.*

YOU WERE MUCH MORE THAN THAT, SUPERMAN.

YOU'VE EARNED EVERY *PENNY* OF *THIS!!*

16

?!? THIS IS A CHECK FOR-- $25,000!!

I DON'T THINK I...?

IT'S A *RETAINER*, SUPERMAN.

YOU'RE ON MY *PAYROLL* NOW.

ENJOY!

ER... I'M VERY *SORRY*, MR. LUTHOR, BUT THERE MUST BE SOME *MIS-UNDERSTANDINGS* HERE.

MY SERVICES ARE NOT FOR *HIRE*.

NONSENSE! EVERYONE WHO'S *ANYONE* IN METROPOLIS WORKS FOR *ME*. YOU'RE FAR TOO VALUABLE A RESOURCE TO LEAVE *UNDIRECTED*.

NOT THAT YOU WERE REALLY NEEDED *HERE*, OF COURSE.

AS YOU CAN SEE, MY *SECURITY TEAM* WAS QUITE CAPABLE OF HANDLING THE SITUATION.

YOUR--*SECURITY TEAM*???

AND WHERE THE HELL WERE *THEY* WHILE ALL THIS WAS GOING ON?

WAITING IN THE WINGS, LOIS. MY ADVANCE SECURITY SUGGESTED SOMETHING LIKE THIS MIGHT HAPPEN.

YOU--YOU *KNEW* ABOUT THIS?

YOU *ALLOWED* IT TO HAPPEN?

NOT *ABSOLUTELY*, OF COURSE. BUT MY SOUTH AMERICAN HOLDINGS HAVE HAD SOME SMALL *PROBLEMS* WITH THESE PEOPLE.

WHEN MY INFORMED SOURCES RELAYED TO ME THE INFORMATION THAT THIS PARTICULAR CADRE MIGHT LAUNCH A HIJACK ATTEMPT AGAINST THE *QUEEN*...

...I ORDERED *MY* MEN TO HOLD BACK, SO THAT WE MIGHT SEE WHAT THIS "*SUPERMAN*" COULD REALLY DO.

YOU... YOU CAN'T *MEAN* THAT?!?

YOU *RISKED THE LIVES* OF ALL THESE PEOPLE, JUST TO SEE WHAT *I* COULD DO?

NO ONE WAS REALLY AT RISK, SUPERMAN. MY MEN WERE READY TO ACT AT A MOMENT'S NOTICE, BUT I WASN'T ABOUT TO BELIEVE ALL THE *WILD STORIES* I'VE BEEN HEARING ABOUT YOU.

I'M TOO SMART A *BUSINESS-MAN* FOR THAT.

YOU'RE ALSO AN *ACCESSORY* TO *MURDER!*

THOSE ANIMALS *KILLED* CLARK KENT!

WELL, ER, *NO*, LOIS. AS A MATTER OF FACT, I *TOOK CARE* OF KENT.

HE'S QUITE *SAFE.*

BUT THAT DOES NOT *ALTER* MATTERS, SUPERMAN. BY HIS ACTIONS, LUTHOR HAS OPENED HIMSELF TO A CHARGE OF *RECK-LESS ENDANGERMENT!*

AS *MAYOR* OF THIS CITY I HEREBY APPOINT YOU A *SPECIAL DEPUTY*, SUPERMAN. I WANT YOU TO *ARREST* THIS MAN!

DON'T BE *ABSURD*, FRANK. YOU CAN'T ARREST *ME*. I'M *LEX LUTHOR*.

I'M THE MOST *POWERFUL* MAN IN METROPOLIS!

NO, YOU'RE *NOT*, LEX. NOT ANY-MORE.

SUPERMAN -- *DO YOUR DUTY!*

18

671950

671950

KNOW YOUR POLICE

CLANG!

THREE DAYS LATER...

HEY, LOOK! IT'S SUPERMAN!

AW-RIGHT!! GO FOR IT, SUPER-DUDE!

MAYBE HE'S HERE TO SEE WHY THIS @#$% SUBWAY IS SO LATE!!

CENTER

LUTHOR PROBE CONTINUES

TWO DAYS AFTER RELEASE

RICO 38

HOT

MTA 3071

DRAIN

A LOGICAL DEDUCTION, BUT NOT QUITE ON THE MONEY. THIS TRAIN IS STALLED, BUT THE REGULAR MAINTENANCE STAFF IS QUITE ABLE TO TAKE CARE OF THAT.

I'M HERE ON ANOTHER MATTER...

SUPERMAN! THANK GOD YOU'RE HERE! THIS POOR WOMAN IS ABOUT TO HAVE HER BABY!!

I KNOW. I OVERHEARD YOUR DRIVER CALLING IN TO THE CENTRAL TOWER.

EASY NOW, MA'M. EVERYTHING'S GOING TO BE FINE.

EVEN WITHOUT USING MY SUPER-SPEED, WHICH MIGHT BE DAMAGING TO YOU...

...I CAN HAVE YOU AT A HOSPITAL IN PLENTY OF TIME!

20

TWO HOURS LATER...

NOW, THAT'S WHAT I CALL A JOB *WELL DONE!*

MOTHER AND CHILD ARE BOTH DOING *JUST FINE!*

I ONLY HOPE LITTLE *ROBERT S. NG* WON'T TAKE TOO MUCH OF A *RIBBING* WHEN HE STARTS SCHOOL AND HIS CLASSMATES FIND OUT WHAT HIS *MIDDLE INITIAL* STANDS FOR!

MRS. NG WAS SO *DETERMINED* TO NAME HIM AFTER ME. AT LEAST I WAS ABLE TO CONVINCE HER "*SUPERMAN*" DOESN'T MAKE A VERY GOOD *FIRST NAME...*

EH?

CLIK!

I WAS JUST *PHOTOGRAPHED.* I KNOW IT. I CAN ALMOST *FEEL* IT.

I SHOULDN'T HAVE LET MYSELF DRIFT OFF LIKE THAT. I'VE BEEN CONSTANTLY ALERT. TO MAKE SURE NO ONE GETS A CLEAR PICTURE OF MY "*SUPERMAN*" FACE.

BUT... I DON'T SEE ANYONE WITH A *CAMERA...?*

ATOMICS

DANGER! RADIOACTIVE MATERIALS

TAXI

MAYBE I JUST IMAGINED IT...

OOO

YOU! *SUPERMAN!!*

LUTHOR!

WHAT DO *YOU* WANT?

I THOUGHT YOU'D STILL BE OFF CONFERRING WITH THOSE *LAWYERS* OF YOURS.

THE ONES WHO HAD YOU BACK ON THE STREET IN LESS THAN *TWO HOURS.*

I HAVE A *MESSAGE* FOR YOU, SUPERMAN.

21

A... MESSAGE...?

YES. THE MOST *IMPORTANT* MESSAGE YOU'LL EVER HEAR.

AND QUITE PROBABLY THE *LAST!*

YOU'VE MADE A *MISTAKE*, SUPERMAN. A *BIG* MISTAKE. A POTENTIALLY *FATAL* MISTAKE.

I *RUN* THIS TOWN, SUPERMAN. METROPOLIS *BELONGS* TO ME. THE PEOPLE ARE *MINE*, TO NURTURE, OR DESTROY, AS I SEE *FIT*.

HOSPITAL

AND THEY'VE *FORGOTTEN* THAT. THEY'VE LOOKED AT YOU, WITH YOUR *COSTUME*, AND YOUR FLASHY *SUPER-HUMAN POWERS*...

AND THEY'VE FORGOTTEN WHO THEIR *MASTER* IS.

WHO IS *NUMBER ONE!!*

AND I INTEND TO *REMIND* THEM, SUPERMAN.

I'M GOING TO SHOW THEM YOU'RE *NOTHING*, SUPERMAN. A CARD-BOARD CUT-OUT.

ONE DAY, VERY *SOON* NOW, YOU'RE GOING TO *DIE*, SUPERMAN.

YOU'RE GOING TO BE *DESTROYED*. AND YOU'LL *KNOW* WHO'S DOING IT.

EVERYONE IN METROPOLIS WILL KNOW.

BUT NO ONE WILL EVER BE ABLE TO *PROVE* IT. I'LL NOT BE *ARRESTED*, SUPERMAN. NOT *EVER* AGAIN.

REMEMBER, SUPERMAN. YOU'RE A *DEAD MAN.*

IT'S JUST A QUESTION OF *HOW SOON!*

A 6 PART MINI SERIES BY BYRNE & GIORDANO

THE BEAST WITHIN!

No. 5

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

SUPERMAN™ THE MAN OF STEEL™

BOOK FIVE

SUPERMAN

THE MIRROR, CRACK'D...

SLOPPY AND *BLATANT.*

IT WAS *OBVIOUS* THIS LITTLE PACKAGE CAME FROM *YOU.*

WAS IT INDEED?

OBVIOUS.

OBVIOUS.

AND *WHAT,* I WONDER, DO YOU CONSIDER OBVIOUS, *SUPERMAN?*

OH, LITTLE THINGS, LUTHOR. LIKE THE FACT THAT EVERY COMPONENT OF THIS BATTLE SUIT CAME FROM A *LEXCORP* COMPANY.

OR THE FACT THIS POOR *GOON* IS CARRYING LEXCORP I.D.

LIKE I SAID-- *SLOPPY.*

IF YOU WERE TO *CHECK* THE RECORDS OF THOSE COMPANIES, I THINK YOU'D FIND ALL THE COMPONENTS YOU REFER TO HAVE BEEN LISTED AS *STOLEN.*

AND, OF COURSE, THIS MAN WAS *FIRED* WEEKS AGO.

BUT NOT QUITE SLOPPY ENOUGH, SUPERMAN.

COMPUTER RECORDS CAN ALWAYS BE *FAKED*, LUTHOR. I THINK WE'LL WAIT AND SEE WHAT THIS MAN HAS TO SAY, WHEN HE REGAINS CONSCIOUSNESS.

I'M AFRAID HE'S LIABLE TO BE...

BUH-DEE BUH-DEE BUH-DEEP!

WE DEVELOPED THIS SUIT UNDER CONTRACT FROM *NASA*, FOR USE UP ON THE *MOONBASE*. BUT WE FOUND THE *PSIONIC CONTROL INTERFACE* WAS *UNSTABLE*.

ANYONE WHO WORE THE SUIT FOR MORE THAN *ONE HOUR* WAS LEFT A *COMPLETE VEGETABLE*.

APPARENTLY, THIS POOR DEVIL DIDN'T *KNOW* THAT.

SO YOU SEE, SUPERMAN, YOU'VE COME ALL THE WAY TO *HONG KONG* FOR NOTHING.

THERE'S NO WAY YOU CAN CONNECT THIS LATEST ATTACK ON YOUR PERSON WITH *ME*.

AND NOW, IF YOU'LL BE SO KIND AS TO *EXCUSE* ME, I AM *VERY* BUSY.

ALL RIGHT, LUTHOR.

WE'LL ADD THIS MAN'S WASTED LIFE TO THE LIST OF *CRIMES* YOU'RE GOING TO ANSWER FOR, SOMEDAY.

AND YOU *WILL PAY*, LUTHOR. I'LL SEE TO THAT. IF YOU CONTINUE YOUR INSANE ATTEMPTS TO *DESTROY* ME, ONE OF THESE TIMES YOU'RE GOING TO SLIP UP, AND *EXPOSE* YOURSELF.

AND I'M GOING TO *NAIL* YOU.

IMPUDENT YOUNG *PUP*! THINKS HIS *SUPER-HUMAN POWERS* MAKE HIM *BETTER* THAN *LEX LUTHOR*!

WELL, HE'S *WRONG*. HE'S VERY, *VERY* WRONG.

TEK!

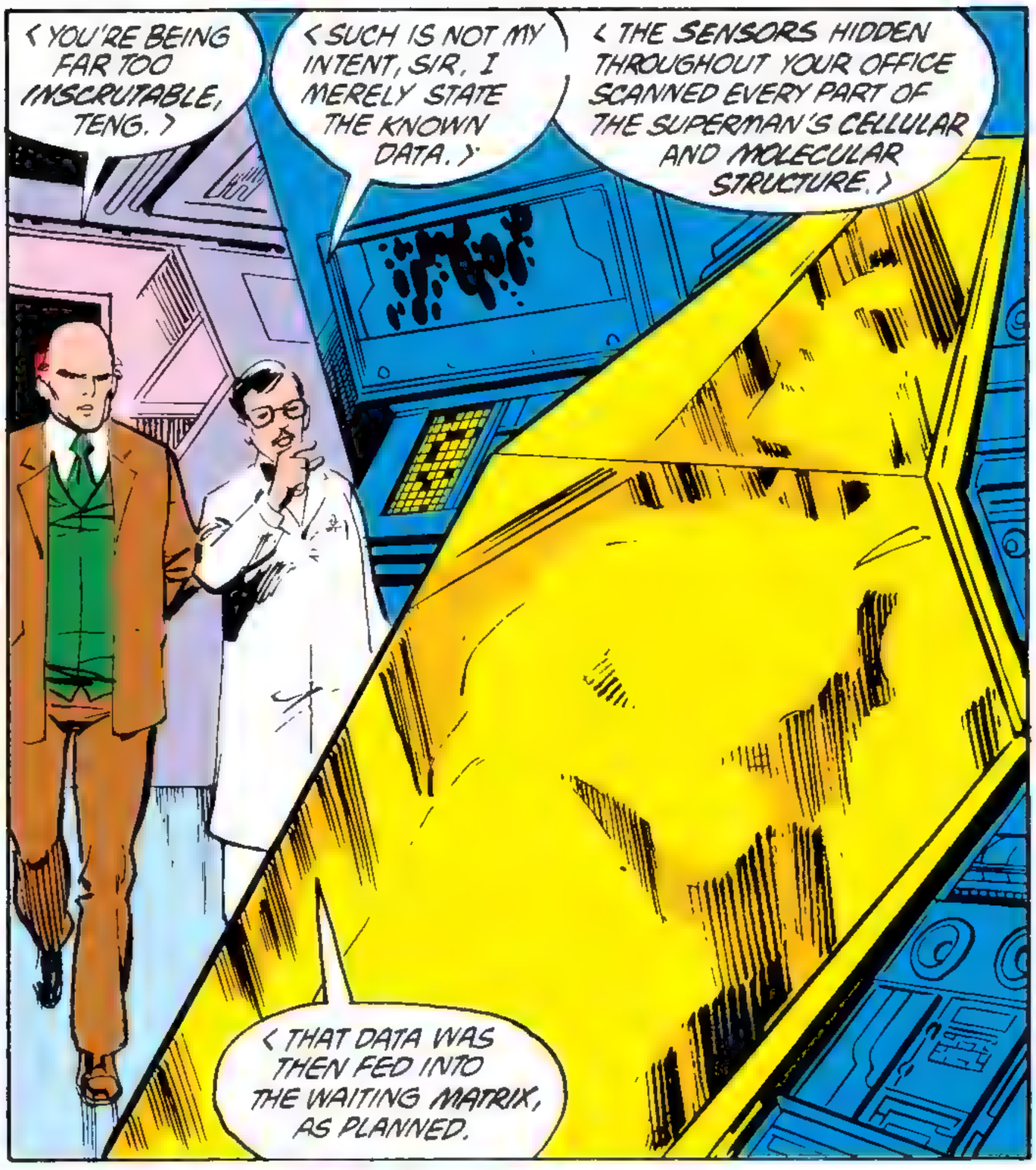
AND THIS IS THE DAY I *PROVE* THAT TO THE *WORLD*!

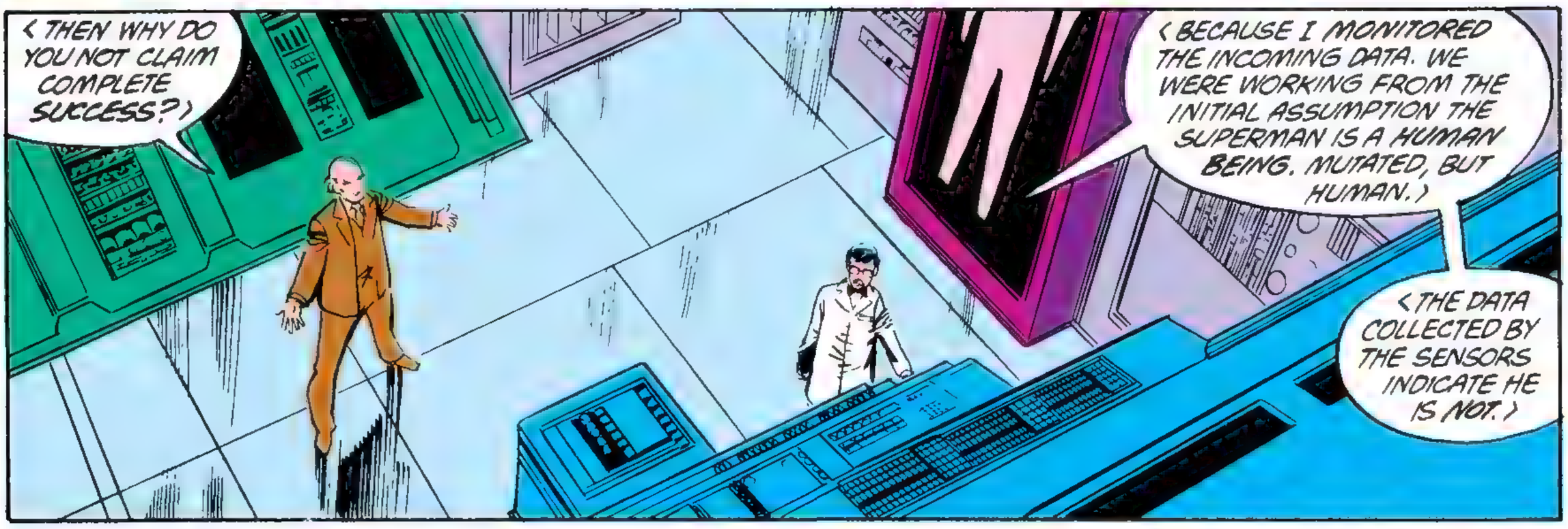
*< WELL, DOCTOR TENG? >**

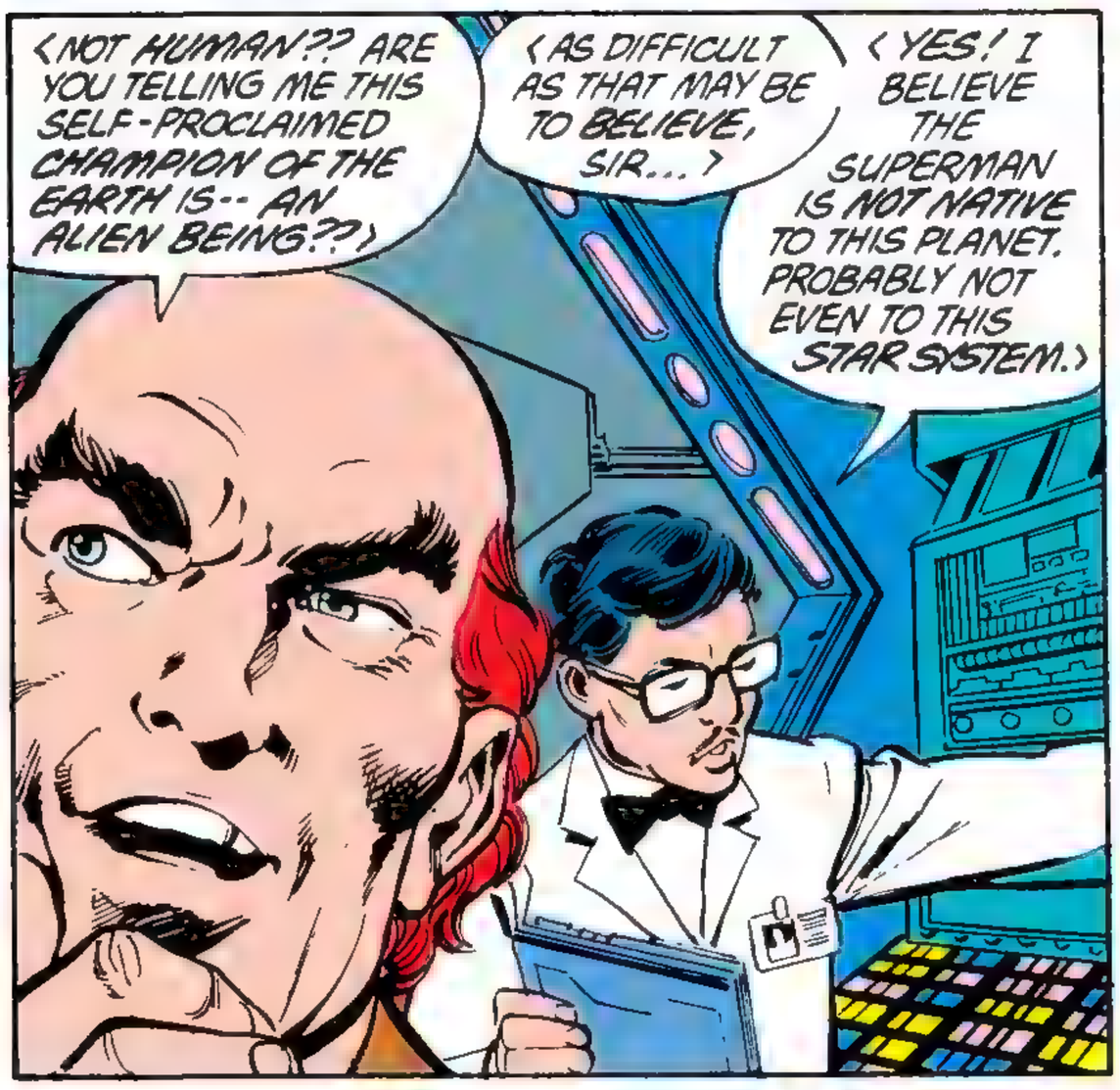
< I BELIEVE WE WERE SUCCESSFUL, MR. LUTHOR. >

* TRANSLATED FROM THE CHINESE!

〈BELIEVE?〉
〈I DIDN'T ENGINEER YOUR ESCAPE FROM MAINLAND CHINA SO YOU COULD "BELIEVE," TENG. I EXPECT YOU TO BE ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN!〉
〈THE MECHANISM HAS DONE WHAT IT WAS DESIGNED TO DO, MR. LUTHOR.〉
〈YOU MAY JUDGE THE DEGREE OF SUCCESS FOR YOURSELF.〉


〈YOU'RE BEING FAR TOO INSCRUTABLE, TENG.〉
〈SUCH IS NOT MY INTENT, SIR. I MERELY STATE THE KNOWN DATA.〉
〈THE SENSORS HIDDEN THROUGHOUT YOUR OFFICE SCANNED EVERY PART OF THE SUPERMAN'S CELLULAR AND MOLECULAR STRUCTURE.〉
〈THAT DATA WAS THEN FED INTO THE WAITING MATRIX, AS PLANNED.


〈THEN WHY DO YOU NOT CLAIM COMPLETE SUCCESS?〉
〈BECAUSE I MONITORED THE INCOMING DATA. WE WERE WORKING FROM THE INITIAL ASSUMPTION THE SUPERMAN IS A HUMAN BEING. MUTATED, BUT HUMAN.〉
〈THE DATA COLLECTED BY THE SENSORS INDICATE HE IS NOT.〉


〈NOT HUMAN?? ARE YOU TELLING ME THIS SELF-PROCLAIMED CHAMPION OF THE EARTH IS-- AN ALIEN BEING??〉
〈AS DIFFICULT AS THAT MAY BE TO BELIEVE, SIR...〉
〈YES! I BELIEVE THE SUPERMAN IS NOT NATIVE TO THIS PLANET. PROBABLY NOT EVEN TO THIS STAR SYSTEM.〉

〈AN ALIEN! AN ALIEN! YES! OF COURSE! IT ALL FITS! THERE'S NO OTHER RATIONAL EXPLANATION FOR HIS POWERS.〉
〈BUT, WHAT OF PROJECT CHANGELING, TENG? WHAT EFFECT HAS THIS DISCOVERY HAD ON THE DUPLICATION PROCESS?〉
〈THAT WE WILL NOW SEE, SIR.〉
4

HE'S--

PERFECT!

PERFECT!

TENG!

<THIS IS JUST AS I FEARED, MR. LUTHOR.>

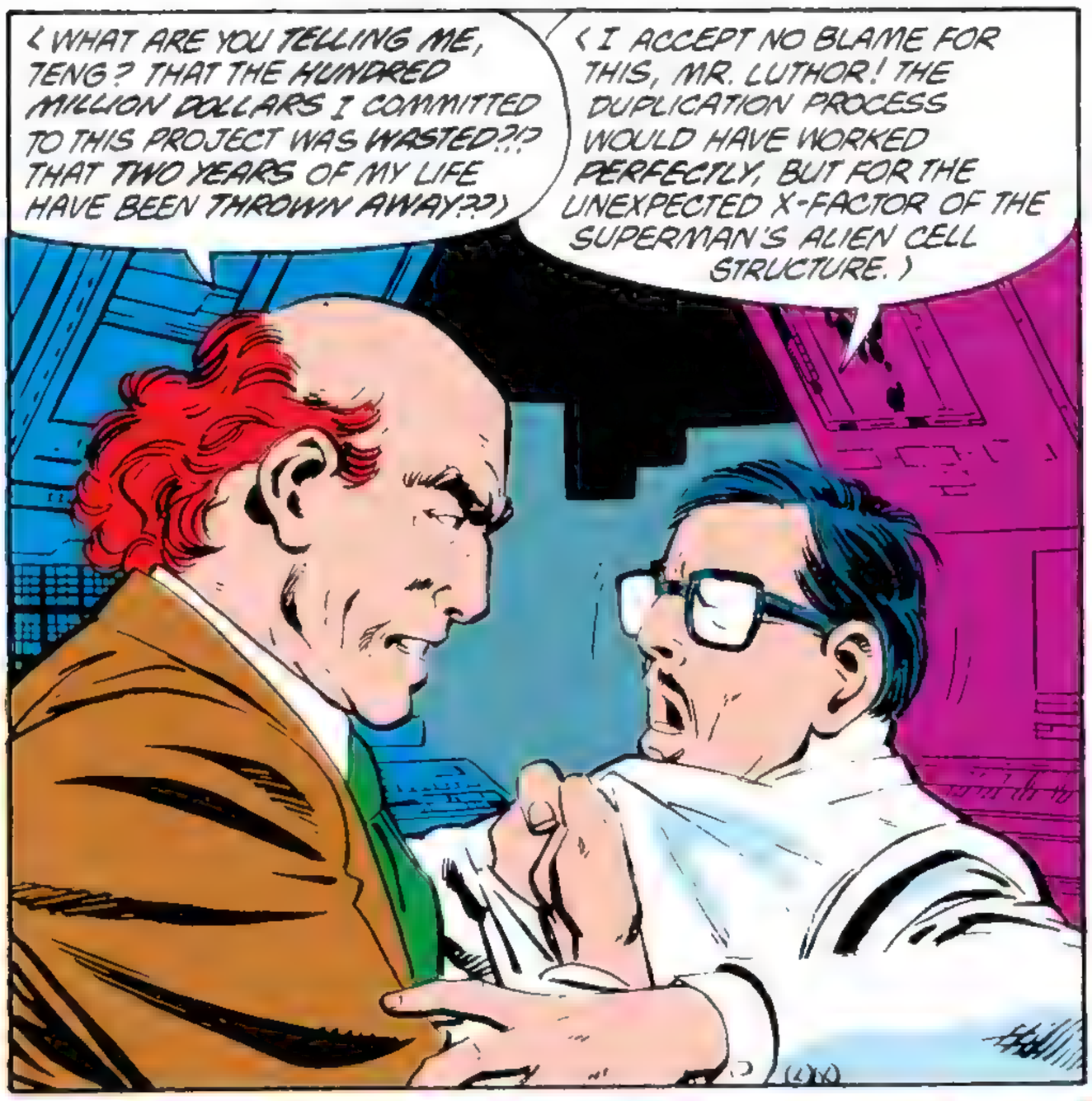
<MY BIO-MATRIX WAS CREATED TO PERFECTLY DUPLICATE ANY KNOWN FORM OF LIFE.>

<BUT THE SUPERMAN IS AN UNKNOWN FORM OF LIFE.>

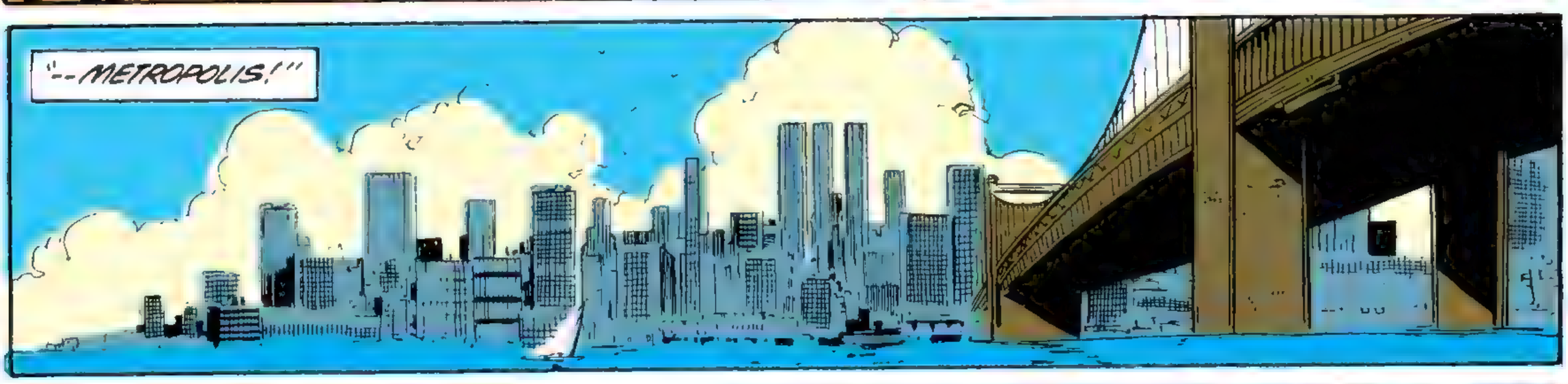
<THE MATRIX IS REJECTING THE ALIEN DNA REPLICA-TION.>

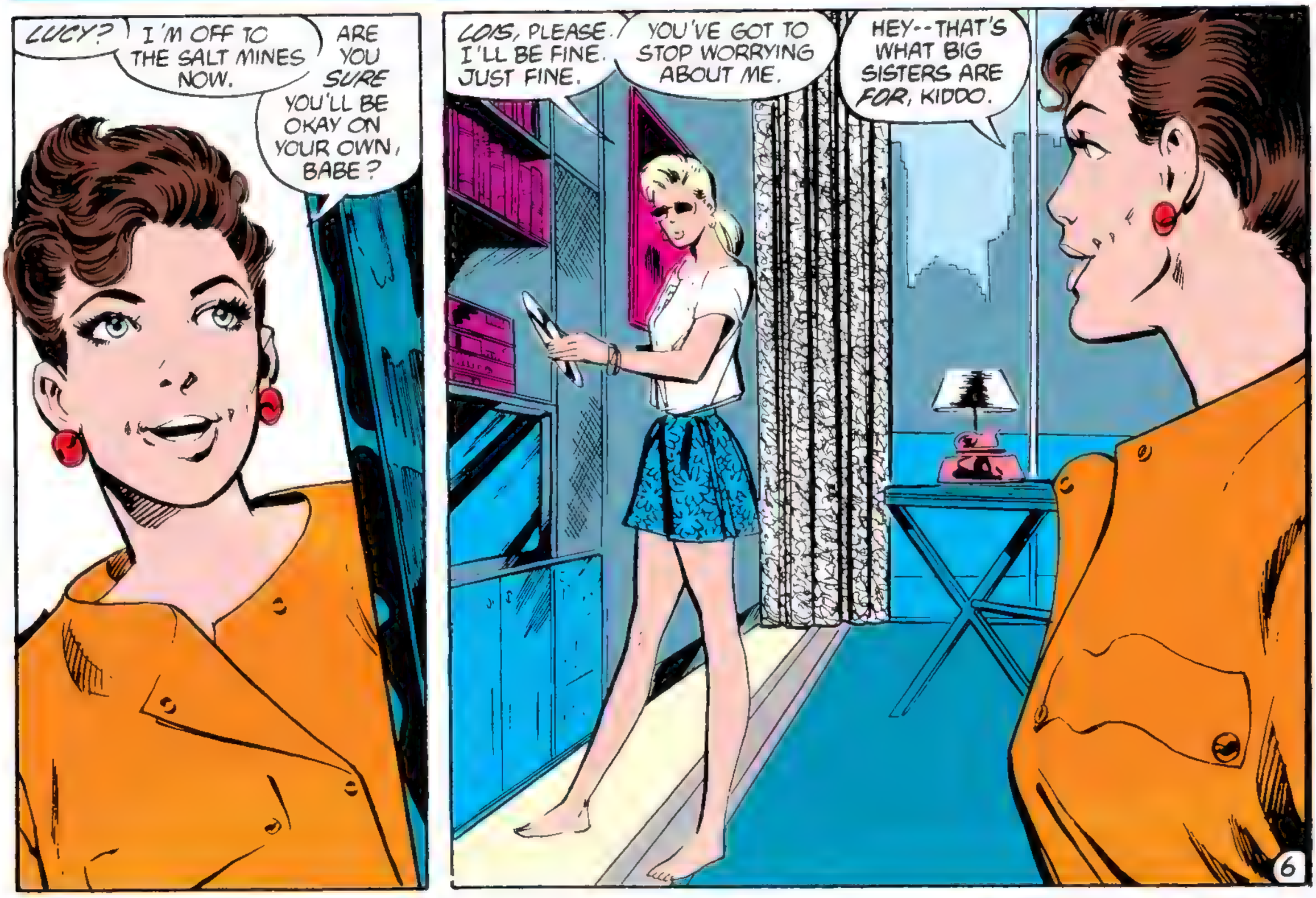
<THE BODY IS CRYSTAL-IZING!>

5


‹WHAT ARE YOU TELLING ME, TENG? THAT THE HUNDRED MILLION DOLLARS I COMMITTED TO THIS PROJECT WAS WASTED?!? THAT TWO YEARS OF MY LIFE HAVE BEEN THROWN AWAY?!›
‹I ACCEPT NO BLAME FOR THIS, MR. LUTHOR! THE DUPLICATION PROCESS WOULD HAVE WORKED PERFECTLY, BUT FOR THE UNEXPECTED X-FACTOR OF THE SUPERMAN'S ALIEN CELL STRUCTURE.›

‹I DON'T WANT EXCUSES, TENG. I WANTED A DUPLICATE SUPERMAN. ONE WITH ALL HIS POWERS. ALL HIS MEMORIES. BUT ONE THAT WORKED FOR ME!›
‹I CERTAINLY DID NOT WANT THIS BIZARRE--›
‹OHH-H!! FORGET IT! DESTROY THE THING BEFORE ANYONE ELSE SEES IT.›
‹I NEVER WANT TO SEE IT, OR YOU AGAIN. I'M GOING HOME, BACK TO--


"--METROPOLIS!"


LUCY?
I'M OFF TO THE SALT MINES NOW.
ARE YOU SURE YOU'LL BE OKAY ON YOUR OWN, BABE?
LOIS, PLEASE. I'LL BE FINE. JUST FINE.
YOU'VE GOT TO STOP WORRYING ABOUT ME.
HEY--THAT'S WHAT BIG SISTERS ARE FOR, KIDDO.
6

BUT YOU'VE GOT YOUR *SUNGLASSES* ON IN THE HOUSE AGAIN. DOCTOR KINCAID TOLD YOU...

I REALLY DON'T *CARE* WHAT HE SAID, LOIS.

I'M NOT WEARING THESE BECAUSE I *NEED TO*. I'M WEARING THEM BECAUSE I *WANT TO*. BECAUSE I DON'T WANT ANYONE SEEING MY *EYES*.

LUCY...

BELIEVE ME, YOUR EYES DON'T LOOK ALL THAT MUCH *DIFFERENT* NOW THAN THEY DID BEFORE...

...BEFORE...

BEFORE I WAS *BLINDED*?

DON'T *KID* ME, LOIS... I'VE SEEN ENOUGH BLIND PEOPLE TO KNOW WHAT I LOOK LIKE.

AND I DON'T WANT ANYONE ELSE TO SEE IT.

THAT'S *UNFAIR*, LUCY, AND YOU KNOW IT. NOT EVERY BLIND PERSON HAS SOMETHING WRONG WITH THEIR EYES THAT YOU CAN *SEE*. AND NEITHER DO YOU.

YEAH, WELL LET ME WALLOW IN MY *BITTERNESS*, THEN

LET THE WHOLE DAMN WORLD LOOK AT ME AND *KNOW* I'M BLIND, LET 'EM ALL *PITY* ME.

LUCY...

OH--DON'T *LISTEN* TO ME, SIS. I JUST GOT UP ON THE WRONG SIDE OF THE BED THIS MORNING.

GO TO WORK. GO BE A CRUSADING REPORTER. AND DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME, PLEASE.

YOU'RE *SURE* YOU'RE OKAY?

I'LL BE *FINE*. I'VE GOT A TON OF BRAILLE BOOKS TO PRACTICE ON. THAT'LL KEEP ME *OCCUPIED*.

I COULD CALL IN *SICK* TODAY AND WE...

I'LL BE FINE.

LOOK--I'LL EVEN TAKE OFF THE *CHEATERS*, JUST FOR YOU!

7

WEEEOOOEEE

JUSMA

556

BLAM

OH NO! A *FLAT!*

WE'LL NEVER CHANGE IT IN TIME TO GET THIS GUY TO THE *EMERGENCY WARD!*

HUNH?

WHAT THE--??

AMBULANCE

395

HOLY COW!

IT'S *SUPERMAN!*

DOWN THERE, SUPERMAN!

YOU CAN SET US RIGHT IN FRONT OF THE EMERGENCY ENTRANCE!

METROPOLIS GENERAL

395

WOW, SUPERMAN!

THAT WAS *TERRIFIC!*

YOU'RE...

A

8

...YOU'RE...

...YOU'RE...

--GULP--

YOU'RE *NOT* SUPERMAN!!

IT'S SOME KIND OF *MONSTER!* RUN FOR IT!

WHY NOT?

LEXCOR

WHY TRY TO KID MYSELF ANY LONGER? I'M A *FLIGHT ATTENDANT.*

I'VE NEVER HAD THE SLIGHTEST INTEREST IN DOING ANYTHING ELSE. NEVER *TRAINED* TO DO ANYTHING ELSE.

AND THERE'S JUST NO *DEMAND* FOR *BLIND* FLIGHT ATTENDANTS.

SO...

FORGIVE ME, LOIS!!

9

OH-H!

WH-WHAT??

S-SUPERMAN??

IS IT REALLY YOU?

M-MY SISTER TOLD ME SHE'D MET YOU A BUNCH OF TIMES...

...BUT I NEVER EXPECTED...

...SUPERMAN...?

WHY DON'T YOU SAY SOMETHING? YOU JUST STOPPED ME FROM KILLING MYSELF. AREN'T YOU GOING TO LECTURE ME, OR SOMETHING?

AND... WHY DO YOU FEEL SO... SO STRANGE?

SO... DUSTY...?

SUPERMAN...?

SUPERMAN, ARE YOU STILL HERE?

SUPERMAN...?

MEANWHILE, IN THE NEWSROOM OF THE DAILY PLANET...

GREETINGS, WAGE-SLAVES. WHAT'S NEWS?

CITY ROOM

WE WIN!

FORD TO CITY DROP DEAD

DAILY PLANET CITY ROOM

;sigh;

IT WOULD BE NEWS IF YOU CAME IN ONE MORNING AND DIDN'T SAY THAT, LOIS.

OH, VERY DROLL, *KENT*. I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU'RE WASTING YOUR DAYS AS A *REPORTER*. YOU COULD BE WRITING *COMEDY MONOLOGS*--

AND *GOOD MORNING* TO YOU, TOO, LOIS.

HOW'S LUCY TODAY? ANY *IMPROVEMENT?*

-- FOR *UNDERTAKERS*.

NO. THE DOCTORS SAY HER SIGHT *COULD* BE RESTORED, IF THEY CAN JUST FIND THE PROPER COMBINATION OF CHEMICALS.

BUT THEY STILL HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO FIGURE OUT EXACTLY WHAT IT WAS THAT *HIJACKER* THREW IN HER FACE LAST YEAR.

HEY, YOU GUYS, DID YOU HEAR THE LATEST *WEIRDIE?*

NO, *JIM*. WHAT'S UP?

SOMEBODY BUSTED THE FRONT WINDOW OF A MEN'S CLOTHING STORE OVER ON BLEEKER. SMASHED A COUPLE THOUSAND DOLLARS' WORTH OF GLASS TO STEAL A *HUNDRED DOLLAR SUIT!*

AND *RIGHT NEXT DOOR* IS A JEWELRY **SHOP WITH $50,000** IN PRECIOUS STONES SITTING IN THE WINDOW!

HMN?

EEEEEEEEEK

MY *SUPER-HEARING* HAS DETECTED A COMMOTION IN THE DOWNSTAIRS LOBBY.

A QUICK LOOK WITH MY *X-RAY VISION* SHOULD...

NEWS

WHAT IN THE NAME OF--??

ER--CATCH YOU PEOPLE LATER. I--WANT TO FOLLOW UP ON THAT STORY. THANKS FOR THE TIP, JIMMY!

STORY? WHAT STORY? IT WAS JUST A WEIRD LITTLE ROBBERY.

MAYBE, JIM-BOY. BUT IF *CLARK KENT* WANTS A PIECE OF IT, SO DO I!

HOLD IT RIGHT WHERE YOU ARE, KENT. I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU THINK YOU'RE *ON TO--*

--BUT YOU'RE NOT GOING TO *SCOOP* ME AGAIN...

STAIRS

KENT--?

"NOW WHERE IN BLAZES DID HE GO??"

GOOD. EVERYBODY'S CLEARED OUT OF THE LOBBY.

STAIRS

EVERYBODY BUT OUR STRANGELY DRESSED FRIEND-- AND WHAT'S HE DOING WITH THOSE *SUNGLASSES?*

OKAY, FELLA, MAYBE YOU'D LIKE TO *EXPLAIN...*

12

GREAT SCOTT!

HE... HE'S DRESSED. AS *ME!* AS *SUPERMAN* AND *CLARK KENT!*

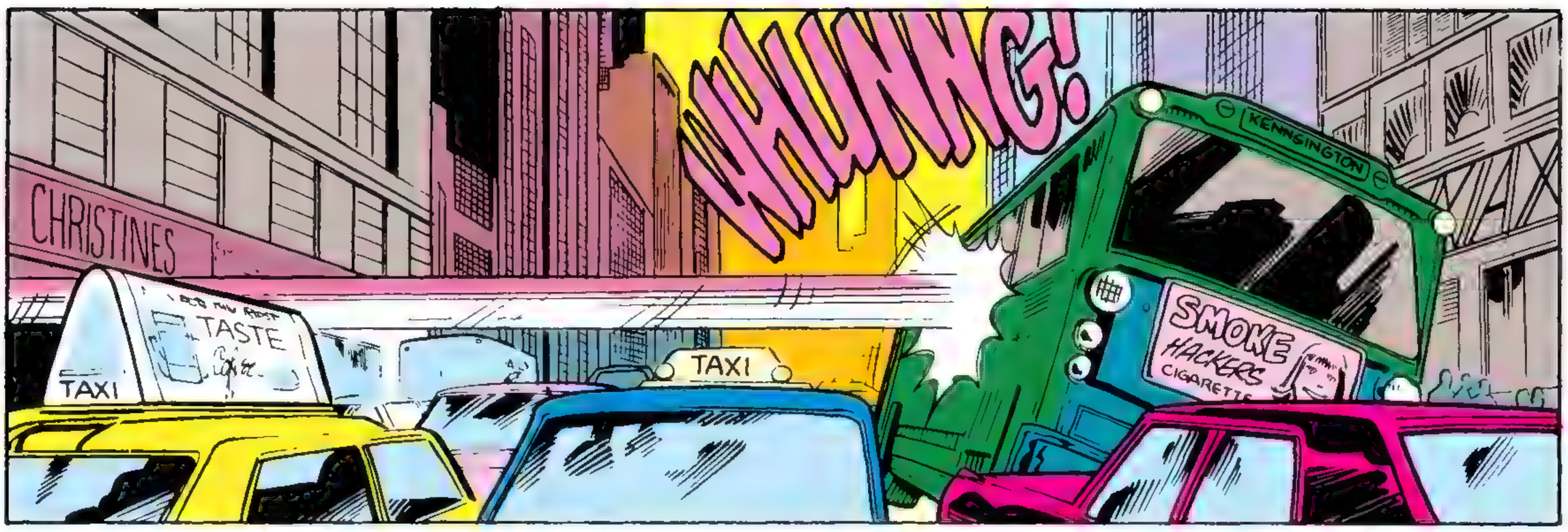
I... THINK YOU'D BETTER COME WITH ME, WHOEVER YOU ARE...

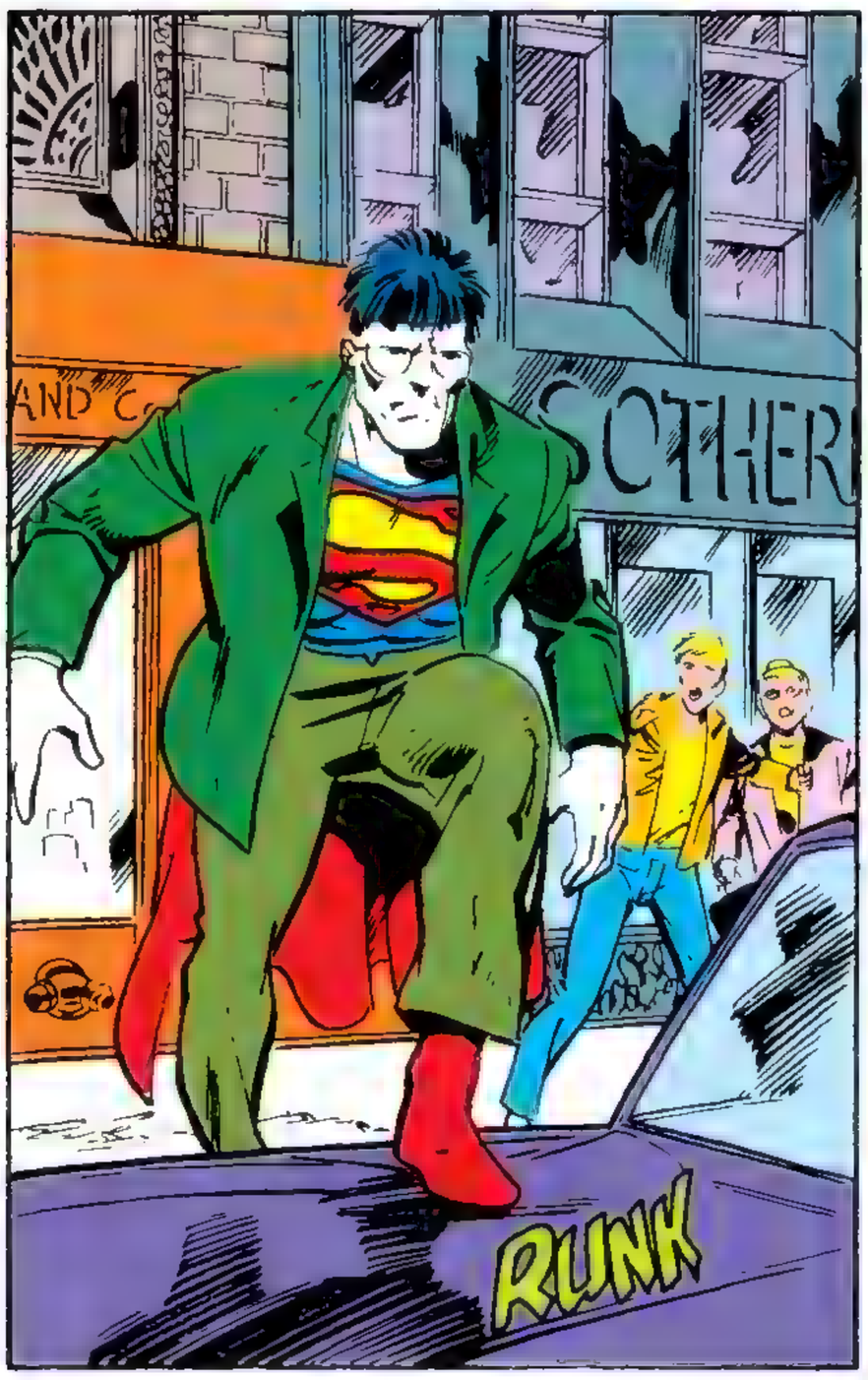
BEFORE ANY OTHER *PLANET* STAFFERS SEE YOU!

HURHR...

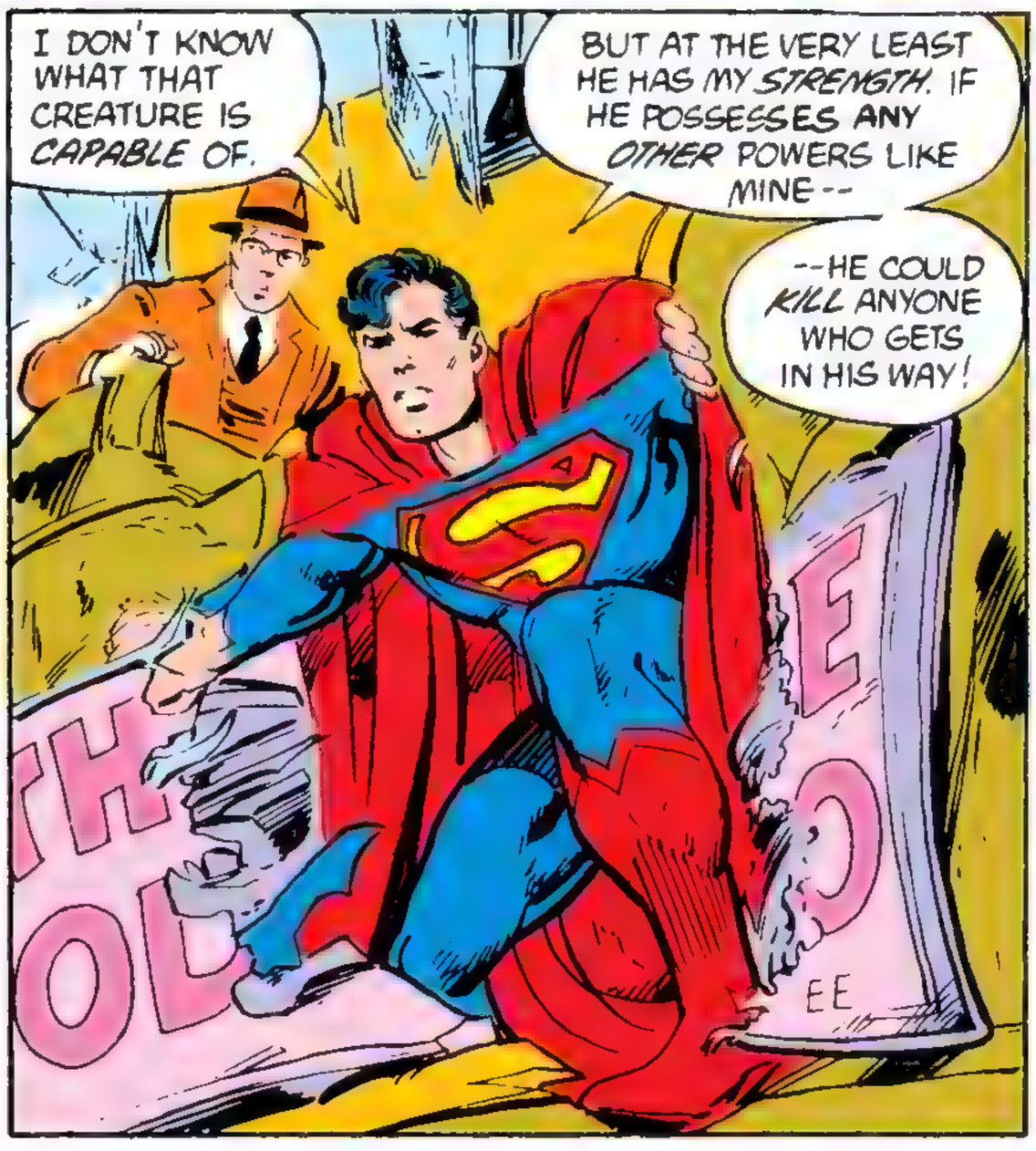
UNGH!!

13


CHRISTINES
TASTE
TAXI
TAXI
WHUNNG!
KENNSINGTON
SMOKE
HACKERS
CIGARETTE


AND C
SOTHER
RUNK

SOOPERMAN! WHA' HOPPEN!?!
WHO IS THAT GUY???
PLEASE...
EVERYONE STAY BACK! DON'T GET BETWEEN HIM AND ME!


I DON'T KNOW WHAT THAT CREATURE IS CAPABLE OF.
BUT AT THE VERY LEAST HE HAS MY STRENGTH. IF HE POSSESSES ANY OTHER POWERS LIKE MINE--
--HE COULD KILL ANYONE WHO GETS IN HIS WAY!
TH
OLD
EE

INCLUDING, QUITE POSSIBLY, ME!
OKAY, HANDSOME-- LET'S JUST TRY THAT ONE AGAIN!
TAX
14

AHHGH!!

HE'S GOT... *HEAT VISION*... AS *INTENSE* AS MY OWN.

I... CAN *RESIST* IT... FOR A WHILE... BUT THE *PAIN*...

GOT TO *STOP* THE BEAMS... BEFORE I PASS OUT... FROM THE *PAIN*...

HUNHR!!

NOW... GOT TO PRESS MY *ADVANTAGE.*

MOVE IN *FAST*, WHILE HE'S STILL OFF-BALANCE.

BUT HOW CAN I *STOP* THIS CREATURE?

IF HE'S REALLY AS *POWERFUL* AS I AM, HOW CAN I BEAT HIM WITHOUT DESTROYING *MYSELF?*

HE'S AT LEAST AS *INVULNERABLE* AS ME.

EXCEPT...WHAT'S THE *DUST* THAT FLIES OFF HIM AT EVERY IMPACT?

IT'S ALMOST AS IF THE CREATURE IS... *CRUMBLING...?*

OH NO! *LOIS!*

UNGH!!

TAXI

SO FAR, NO ONE HAS GUESSED "*SUPERMAN*" IS JUST THE NAME I USE WHEN I'M NOT BEING CLARK KENT.

THE LAST THING I NEED IS FOR LOIS TO SEE THIS CREATURE DRESSED AS *BOTH* MY IDENTITIES. SHE'S FAR TOO *BRIGHT* NOT TO PUT TWO AND TWO TOGETHER...

...HOWEVER *ILLOGICAL* THAT ADDITION MIGHT SEEM.

SO LET'S SEE HOW OUR FRIEND LIKES BEING ON THE *RECEIVING END* OF *MY* HEAT-VISION!

16

BLAST! THAT GOT RID OF HIS "DISGUISE," BUT IT DIDN'T EVEN SLOW HIM...

UNGH!!

SUPERMAN! WHAT'S HAPPENING? WHO IS THIS MAN??

UHRR?

LOIS! STAY BACK! DON'T...

HEY!!

LEMME GO!

NO! PUT ME DOWN!!

SUPERMAN!!

DO SOME-THING!!

LOIS!

THAT CREATURE REALLY *DOES* HAVE ALL MY POWERS!

IF HE SHARES MY *MEMORIES*, TOO, THE *FEELINGS* I'VE BEEN HAVING TOWARDS LOIS...

I'VE GOT TO *STOP* HIM BEFORE SOMETHING *REALLY* TRAGIC HAPPENS!

17

I DON'T KNOW WHAT THIS THING IS, OR WHERE IT CAME FROM, BUT IT SEEMS TO *THINK* IT'S *SUPERMAN*. MAYBE I CAN *REASON* WITH IT...

ER... LISTEN... CAN WE *TALK*? I'M *LOIS LANE*. I'M A *REPORTER* FOR THE *DAILY PLANET*.

I...

...ER...

...OH NO.

NO...

...UMMPH!!

I DON'T *BELIEVE* IT! *FIVE YEARS* I'VE BEEN DREAMING OF BEING KISSED BY SUPERMAN...

...NOW THIS... THIS... *THING*...!!

LOIS?

LOIS, IS THAT *YOU*?

IS THAT *SUPERMAN*?

IT'S *ME*, ALL RIGHT, KIDDO, BUT THIS ISN'T...

!?!

LUCY...?! YOU CAN *SEE ME*??

N-NOT VERY *CLEARLY*, SIS, BUT... *YES*. MY VISION STARTED TO *CLEAR* JUST A LITTLE AFTER SUPERMAN LEFT...

SUPERMAN? HE WAS *HERE*?

I... DON'T KNOW. IT'S ALL TOO *CRAZY*. BUT... THIS MAN...

LUCY, WHAT'S GOING ON?

HE WAS *HERE*, AND AFTER HE *LEFT*... I STARTED TO SEE... SHAPES... SHADOWS...

18

LOIS! LUCY! GET *AWAY* FROM HIM!

SUPERMAN! THANK GOD!

SUPERMAN? YOU MEAN THERE'S *TWO* OF HIM?

ONLY *ONE* OF THE REAL McCOY, LUCY. NOW, GET CLEAR, YOU TWO.

I'VE GOT TO *CORRAL* THIS CARICATURE OF ME BEFORE ANY *MORE* DAMAGE IS...

...DONE...

RRAHHR!!

UNNH... I WAS... AFRAID OF THIS.

I'VE NEVER HAD TO GO UP AGAINST ANYONE EVEN *REMOTELY* AS POWERFUL AS I AM.

I'VE FALLEN INTO THE HABIT OF *PULLING* MY PUNCHES.

BUT THIS *DOPPEL-GANGER* IS CUTTING LOOSE WITH THE EQUIVALENT OF MY *FULL STRENGTH!*

IT'S STARTING TO LOOK MORE AND MORE AS IF ONLY *ONE* OF US IS GOING TO WALK AWAY FROM THIS *ALIVE...*

...AND IT WON'T BE *ME!!*

UNLESS.

THE *DUST* THAT COMES OFF THAT CREATURE EVERY TIME HE *MOVES...*

PERHAPS IF I EXAMINE IT WITH MY *MICROSCOPIC-VISION...*

HEL-LO!

IT'S NOT *ORGANIC!* IT HAS THE NECESSARY COMPONENTS TO *MIMIC* LIVING CELLS...

BUT IT'S *NOT ALIVE.* AND THAT MEANS...

OUR UGLY FRIEND IS SOME KIND OF *ANDROID*-- AN *ARTIFICIAL BEING*-- JUST ONE STEP AHEAD OF A *ROBOT!*

THAT GIVES ME *ONE CHANCE.*

BUT ONLY *ONE!*

I'VE GOT TO *HIT* THAT BRUTE WITH *EVERYTHING* I'VE GOT!!

21

HE'S MOVING AWAY...

BACK TOWARDS LOIS'S APARTMENT.

WHAT'S HE UP TO?

WAIT...

HE'S SWINGING AROUND...

HE'S HURLING HIMSELF AT ME.

AT *FULL SPEED!!*

NO TURNING BACK NOW.

IT'S *HIM* OR *ME!*

THIS IS IT!!

SHOOM!

22

SUPERMAN!!

...L-LOIS...

LOIS... I CAN... SEE!!!

LUCY...?

I CAN SEE!! LOIS, I CAN SEE! CLEARLY! JUST THE WAY I COULD BEFORE I WAS BLINDED!

I CAN SEE!!

BUT... HOW?

HOW...??

I THINK I CAN GUESS, LOIS.

SUPERMAN! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

I... THINK SO, LOIS.

I OVERHEARD WHAT LUCY SAID, EARLIER, ABOUT HER VISION BEING PARTIALLY RESTORED AFTER CONTACT WITH THAT CREATURE.

I THINK THAT MUST HAVE BEEN CAUSED BY EXPOSURE TO SOME OF THE DUST FROM ITS BODY.

SOMEHOW IT COUNTER-ACTED THE CHEMICALS THAT ORIGINALLY CAUSED HER BLINDNESS.

SHATTERING THE THING'S UNLIVING BODY CREATED ENOUGH OF THE DUST TO CURE HER.

AND... AND YOU KNEW, SUPERMAN?

YOU KNEW THAT, WHEN YOU RISKED YOUR LIFE TO DESTROY HIM?

NO.

NO, I DIDN'T, LUCY.

I DIDN'T...

BUT...

...SOMEHOW I THINK...

...HE DID!

23

A 6 PART MINI-SERIES BY BYRNE & GIORDANO

RETURN TO SMALLVILLE--THE EPIC CONCLUSION!

No. 6

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

THE MAN OF STEEL™

BOOK SIX

SUPERMAN® THE HAUNTING

IT'S BEEN QUITE A WHILE SINCE I LAST GOT OUT THIS WAY.

BOTH MY LIVES HAVE BEEN PRETTY *HECTIC*.

BUT *MA* AND *PA* HAVE ALWAYS BEEN *UNDERSTANDING* ABOUT IT.

WHEN YOUR *SON* IS A *SUPER-HERO*, IT MAKES IT HARD FOR HIM TO GET *HOME* AS OFTEN AS THEY MIGHT *LIKE*.

EVERYTHING LOOKS THE SAME. GOOD OL' SMALLVILLE! YOU'LL *NEVER* CHANGE.

AND I WOULDN'T *WANT* YOU TO, IF THE TRUTH BE KNOWN.

SMALLVILLE MART

IT'S *GOOD* TO HAVE A PLACE I CAN GO. A PLACE WHERE THE PEOPLE ARE SO *DOWN TO EARTH* AND *NORMAL*.

A PLACE WHERE NO ONE'S LIKELY TO MAKE DEMANDS ON *EITHER* OF MY IDENTITIES.

BUS

I CAME INTO TOWN *SO FAST*, NO ONE HAD A CHANCE TO *SPOT* ME.

NOW, AN ADDITIONAL BURST OF *SUPER-SPEED*...

...AND *CLARK KENT* CAN MINGLE WITH THE ARRIVING PASSENGERS, AND LOOK FOR ALL THE WORLD LIKE I JUST GOT OFF THE BUS FROM *KANSAS CITY!*

CLARK! YOO-HOO! OVER HERE, SON!

2

MA! PA! IT'S *GREAT* TO SEE YOU BOTH!

IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU TOO, SON! I'M SO *GLAD* YOU WERE ABLE TO FIND TIME FOR A QUICK VACATION.

WELL, NOT EXACTLY A *VACATION*, MA. THE LIFE OF A *NEWSPAPER REPORTER* DOESN'T ALLOW FOR MUCH IN THE WAY OF *SPARE TIME*.

I'M PRETTY MUCH *WORKING* EVEN WHEN I'M *NOT*, IF YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN.

YOU'RE TALKIN' TO A *FARMER*, SON, REMEMBER? EVEN THOUGH I'M MOSTLY *RETIRED* NOW, I STILL PUT IN A FULL WEEK.

OH -- AND BY THE WAY, WE SAW THAT *PIECE* YOU DID ON THE *REVOLUTION* IN ZIMBAZWE. *FIRST RATE*, SON.

Coke

WELL, I HAD "*HELP*" ON THAT ONE. *SUPERMAN* CAN GO A LOT OF PLACES CLARK KENT CAN'T.

BUT, WHAT ABOUT YOU TWO? I KNOW IT'S ONLY BEEN A FEW WEEKS, BUT IT SEEMS LIKE *YEARS* SINCE WE LAST TALKED. HOW'S EVERYTHING ON THE HOMESTEAD?

OH, JUST AS RIGHT AS RAIN, HONEY. MARY ELLEN ANDERSEN HAD *TWINS* A WEEK BACK, AN' TOM HAROLD'S BOY CLYDE -- YOU REMEMBER HIM? -- HE COMMENCES UNIVERSITY IN A FEW WEEKS.

YEP. YOU KNOW THIS TOWN, SON. EVERYTHING STAYS THE SAME, MOSTLY.

MIND YOU, THERE *IS* ONE THING WE DIDN'T TELL...

YOOOLIFE!

...PA...?

ER...NOTHING, SON. IT'LL KEEP. IT'LL KEEP.

3

MMMMMMMMM BOY!

MA, YOU STILL MAKE THE *BEST* RHUBARB PIE IN THE KNOWN UNIVERSE! I HAVEN'T EATEN THIS WELL SINCE--WELL, SINCE THE *LAST TIME* I WAS HOME!

I HOPE YOU'RE TAKING GOOD CARE OF YOURSELF IN THAT *BIG CITY*, SON.

OH, MARTHA! THE BOY'S DARNED NEAR *INDESTRUC-TIBLE!*

WHAT I WANT NOW IS TO HEAR ALL ABOUT THIS *LOIS LANE* GAL. YOU'VE MENTIONED HER IN *EVERY ONE* OF YOUR LETTERS, *SWEET* ON HER, SON?

UM--WELL--I DIDN'T THINK I WAS BEING SO *TRANSPARENT*, PA. YES, I *DO* LIKE LOIS. I LIKE HER A *LOT*.

UNFORTUNATELY, SINCE I "*BEAT*" HER TO THE FIRST *EXCLUSIVE STORY* ON SUPERMAN--WELL, SHE HASN'T EXACTLY BEEN CLARK KENT'S BIGGEST *FAN*.

OH, TISH TOSH, BOY! HOW COULD ANY NORMAL, HEALTHY WOMAN *RESIST* A BIG *HUGGY BEAR* LIKE YOU?

YOU SERIOUS ABOUT THIS LOIS, YOU GET *AFTER* HER.

MA...!!

BUT... YOU'RE PROBABLY *RIGHT*. I'VE BEEN CONTENTING MYSELF WITH HER CLEAR INFATUATION WITH SUPERMAN, BUT IT'S NOT *ENOUGH*.

SUPERMAN ISN'T *REAL*, HE'S JUST A FANCY PAIR OF LONGJOHNS THAT LETS ME OPERATE IN PUBLIC WITHOUT LOSING MY PRIVATE LIFE.

AND IT'S THAT PRIVATE LIFE THAT'S *INCOMPLETE* WITHOUT SOMEONE LIKE LOIS.

WHEN I GET BACK TO *METROPOLIS* TUESDAY MORNING, I'M GOING TO HAVE TO *DO* SOMETHING ABOUT THAT!

4

S'NO GOOD.

I JUST CAN'T FALL ASLEEP.

IT DOESN'T HELP THAT I'M NOT *TIRED*-- I DON'T *GET* TIRED VERY OFTEN.

BUT, WHAT *PA* STARTED TO SAY ABOUT SOMETHING THEY DIDN'T *TELL* ME...

WHAT COULD HE HAVE MEANT? AND WHY DID *MA SHUSH* HIM SO TOTALLY?

I FIND IT HARD -- MAKE THAT *IMPOSSIBLE*-- TO IMAGINE THEM HAVING ANYTHING TO *HIDE*.

SMALLVILLE

ESPECIALLY FROM *ME*.

I'M NOT THEIR *NATURAL* SON-- I CAN STILL REMEMBER *EXACTLY* HOW I FELT WHEN PA DROPPED THAT PARTICULAR *BOMBSHELL*-- BUT I'VE NEVER FELT ANY LACK OF LOVE OR CARING FROM THEM.

THERE AREN'T TWO PEOPLE IN THE *WORLD* BETTER SUITED TO THE LIFE-LONG PROFESSION OF BEING GOOD PARENTS.

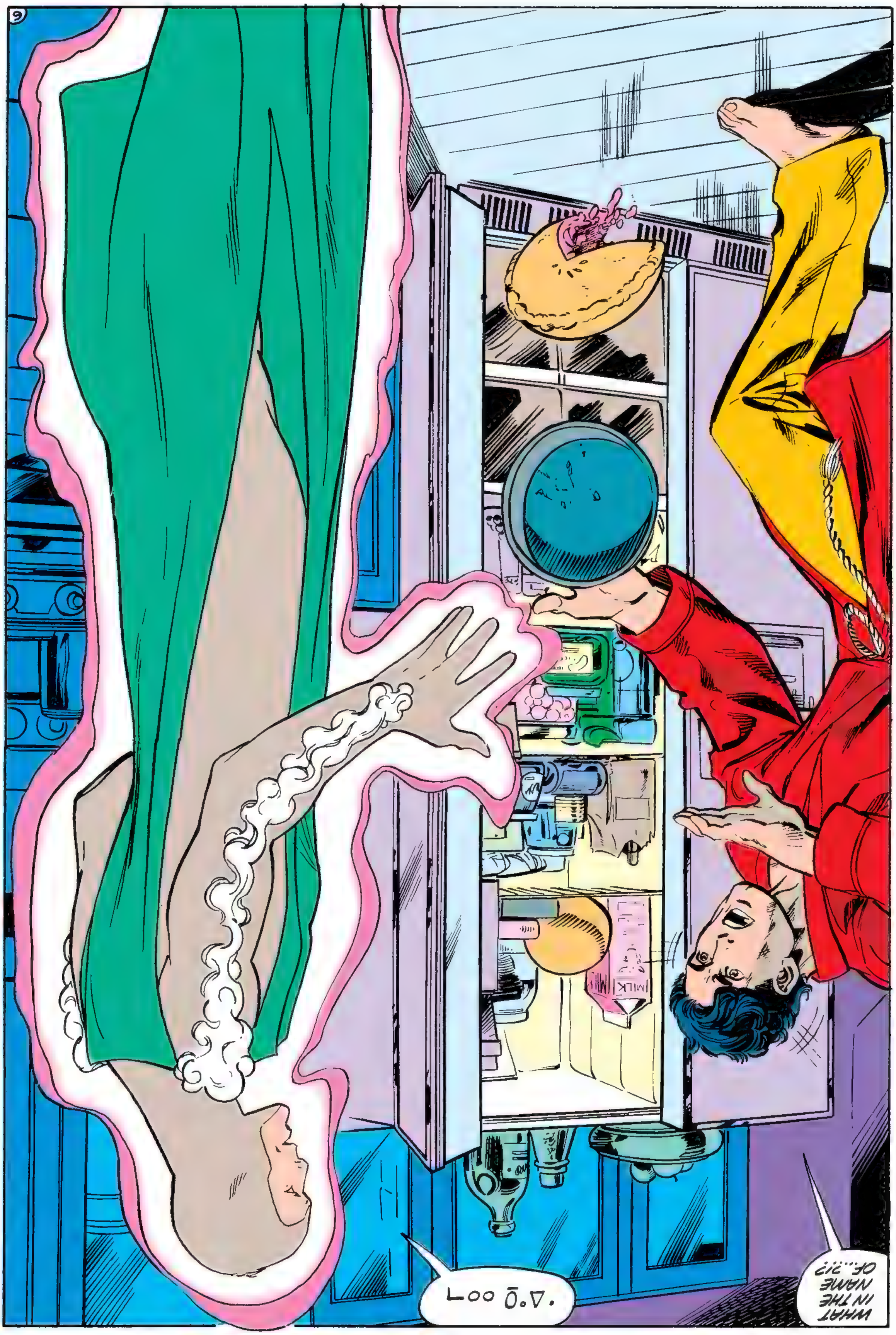
SO HOW CAN I POSSIBLY BELIEVE THEY HAVE SOME *SECRET* THEY WANT TO KEEP HIDDEN FROM ME?

FROM *ME*, OF ALL PEOPLE! THEY KNOW FULL WELL MY *POWERS* AND *ABILITIES* MAKE THE WHOLE PLANET VIRTUALLY AN *OPEN BOOK* TO ME.

Bread

I WONDER IF...

HM?


6
MILK
WHAT IN THE NAME OF...?!?
LOO O.V.

WHAT--WHO ARE YOU? I SEE YOU, HEAR YOU...

BUT MY SUPER-SENSES DON'T DETECT ANYTHING BUT EMPTY AIR!

◊,o¹Δ♀ ∞

I CAN'T UNDERSTAND YOU. WHAT DO YOU WANT HERE?

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO...

ΔΔ·Φ⌐ ◊◊ ∞

...DO...

YEEE-EEAGH!!

MY... BRAIN...

FEELS LIKE... IT'S ON FIRE!

CAN'T...THINK STRAIGHT.

CAN'T Δ° MY °♀▵o¬...

WHAT LANGUAGE I Δ° SPEAKING???

7

Ø°° Δ¬

WHAT'S ØO° ON??

I'M ' COSTUME??

ØØô·Δ

Δ...

WHERE AM I??

WAIT!

DON'T RUN AWAY! PLEASE!

HELP ME!

TELL ME WHERE I...

...AM...??

JOR-EL?

WHAT... THAT *NAME*...?? WHAT DOES IT *MEAN*?

WHO ARE *YOU*?

NO... YOU ARE *NOT* JOR-EL.

YET, I SEE HIM *IN* YOU. IN YOUR EYES. THE SHAPE OF YOUR MOUTH...

YES. YOU ARE *MY SON.*

YOUR...?!?!?

MY... SON...

C-CLARK??

L-LANA...?

LANA LANG??

YES, CLARK. IT'S *ME*.

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

YOU CAME *CHARGING* ACROSS YOUR FATHER'S FIELD LIKE THE *DEVIL* HIMSELF WAS AFTER YOU.

WHAT *HAPPENED*?

"...*CHARGING*...?"

YES...THERE *WAS* SOME KIND OF... *MOTOR STIMULATION*. I...*MOVED*... I WAS WALKING AROUND ON THAT... THAT...

SIT DOWN, CLARK. TAKE IT EASY. TRY TO GET A GRIP ON YOURSELF.

TELL ME WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT.

I... I DON'T *KNOW*, LANA. I... CAN'T THINK OF ANY WAY TO PUT IT INTO *WORDS*. IT WAS... A *NIGHTMARE*, *INSANITY*!

BUT... LANA, WHAT ARE *YOU* DOING HERE? MA AND PA TOLD ME YOU'D *LEFT* SMALLVILLE. *YEARS* AGO.

LEFT. YES. I DID LEAVE. I LEFT FOR A LONG TIME. I *HAD TO* LEAVE...

...AFTER WHAT YOU *DID* TO ME.

TO MY *LIFE*.

"DID TO YOU...?"

I...I DON'T...

IT'S...ALL RIGHT, CLARK.

I DON'T *EXPECT* YOU TO UNDERSTAND, NOT RIGHT AWAY.

BUT... MAYBE IF YOU COULD *REMEMBER*...

"*REMEMBER* TEN YEARS AGO...

"I WAS GETTING READY FOR THE *VICTORY* SOCK-HOP AFTER THE BIG WIN AGAINST COMPTON HIGH.

"THE GAME YOU WON ALMOST SINGLE-HANDED."

LANA, YOU HAVE A *VISITOR*...

THANKS, AUNT HELEN.

CLARK! WHAT'S THE MATTER?

YOU LOOK *AWFUL!*

LANA...

I...

WE NEED TO *TALK*.

"WE TOOK A LONG STROLL, OUT UNDER A BIG AUTUMN MOON, WITH THE AIR FULL OF THE SCENT OF DRY LEAVES AND HAY.

"WE'D BEEN BEST FRIENDS FOREVER BY THEN, CLARK. MORE THAN FRIENDS. I CONFESS, THERE, IN THE MOONLIGHT, ON SUCH A *ROMANTIC* NIGHT, I HALF-EXPECTED YOU TO *PROPOSE*...

"TO ASK ME TO *MARRY* YOU.

"BUT YOU *DIDN'T*.

"INSTEAD, YOU TALKED ABOUT THE *WORLD*, THE BAD THINGS HAPPENING OUTSIDE SMALLVILLE.

"WAR. FAMINE. CRIME."

...AND *ONE MAN* CAN MAKE A *DIFFERENCE*, LANA. IF HE'S THE *RIGHT* MAN.

AND I THINK, MAYBE, I WAS MEANT TO BE THAT MAN.

YOU?

BUT, CLARK... I MEAN, YOU'RE A TERRIFIC *ATHLETE*, AND *SMART* AS A *WHIP*...

BUT, WHAT CAN *YOU* DO?

LOTS OF THINGS, LANA. THINGS MAYBE *NOBODY ELSE ON EARTH* CAN DO.

BUT... THE BEST WAY I CAN SHOW YOU...

CLARK!

IS IF I JUST *SHOW* YOU!!

"YOU SHOWED ME, ALL RIGHT. SHOWED ME SOMETHING I'D ONLY READ ABOUT...

"... DREAMED ABOUT."

CLARK!

12

"WE FLEW AROUND THE WORLD THAT NIGHT. IT WAS A DREAM. A BEAUTIFUL, MAGICAL DREAM COME TRUE.

"A DREAM THAT WOULD TURN INTO A NIGHTMARE!

"YOU TOOK ME BACK HOME--YOU SAID A LONG GOODBYE--GOODBYE TO ME, TO SMALLVILLE...

"YOU KISSED ME. LIKE A BROTHER KISSING HIS SISTER.

"AND YOU WERE GONE.

"GONE FROM THE FRONT PORCH OF MY AUNT'S HOUSE.

"GONE FROM SMALLVILLE."

GONE FROM MY LIFE.

AND EVERYTHING GOOD WAS GONE WITH YOU.

LANA...

I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND...

PLEASE STOP SAYING THAT, CLARK.

I KNOW YOU DON'T.

I KNOW YOU DIDN'T MEAN TO DO WHAT YOU DID.

YOU WANTED TO SHARE A STRANGE AND WONDERFUL SECRET WITH ME. WITH YOUR OLDEST, CLOSEST FRIEND.

INSTEAD, YOU TORE OPEN THE SEAMS OF MY LIFE, AND LEFT ME EMPTY, CLARK.

13

YOU OPENED A DOOR TO ME, CLARK. THE DOOR THAT LEADS OUT INTO THE WHOLE *UNIVERSE*.

AND THEN YOU *CLOSED IT*, AGAIN.

FOREVER.

BECAUSE I REALIZED, AS YOU FLEW OFF INTO THAT DAWN A DECADE AGO-- I REALIZED YOU COULD NEVER BE *MINE*.

ALL MY LIFE I'D LOVED YOU, CLARK. BUT, IN THAT MOMENT, THAT MORNING, YOU WERE TAKEN AWAY FROM ME.

BECAUSE YOU CAN NEVER BELONG TO *ONE WOMAN*, CLARK.

YOU'RE *SUPERMAN*. AND SUPERMAN BELONGS TO THE *WORLD*.

LANA... I DIDN'T KNOW. I- I'M *SORRY*. I'M SO VERY, VERY SORRY.

IF THERE'S ANYTHING I CAN DO TO MAKE IT UP TO YOU...

NO, CLARK. FOR A WHILE I *HATED* YOU. WHEN SUPERMAN FIRST APPEARED, I THOUGHT ABOUT REVEALING YOUR SECRET. BUT EVENTUALLY I CAME TO REALIZE YOU'D MEANT WELL.

FOR A LOT OF YEARS I *FOLLOWED* YOU. I FOLLOWED SUPERMAN, JUST *WATCHING*. HOPING. DREAMING.

AND THEN I CAME BACK TO SMALLVILLE. BACK TO THE HOUSE I GREW UP IN. IT'S FALLEN INTO BAD REPAIR SINCE AUNT HELEN PASSED ON. BUT IT'S AN ANCHOR, A PIECE OF MY OLD LIFE.

I ASKED YOUR MA AND PA NOT TO TELL YOU I WAS BACK. NOT TO TELL YOU WHAT HAD HAPPENED.

YOUR MA UNDERSTOOD. I DON'T THINK YOUR PA EVER WILL.

I'M... HAPPY NOW, CLARK.

NOT AS HAPPY AS I MIGHT HAVE BEEN IF YOU WERE JUST AN ORDINARY MAN AND WE'D RAISED ABOUT A DOZEN ORDINARY KIDS...

BUT HAPPY IN MY OWN WAY. KNOWING YOUR SECRET. KNOWING YOU TOLD ME WHAT YOU TOLD ME, SHOWED ME WHAT YOU SHOWED ME OUT OF *LOVE*.

14

"...YOU SHOWED ME OUT OF LOVE...

"...OUT OF LOVE...

"...LOVE..."

"THIS LOIS LANE GAL... SWEET ON HER, SON?"

"...LIFE'S INCOMPLETE WITHOUT SOMEONE LIKE LOIS..."

"YOU CAN NEVER BELONG TO ONE WOMAN, CLARK..."

LOIS.

"SUPERMAN BELONGS TO THE WORLD."

TO THE WORLD.

BUT WHICH WORLD?

ALL THESE YEARS I'VE *SKIRTED* THAT QUESTION.

WHO AM I?

WHERE DID I COME FROM?

MA AND PA *FOUND* ME, TWENTY-EIGHT YEARS AGO.

FOUND ME IN THIS FIELD...

IN A *ROCKETSHIP* THEY KEPT HIDDEN FROM THE REST OF THE WORLD.

THIS ROCKET...

OH MY GOD!

15

IT'S GONE!

DID PA MOVE IT? AND NOT TELL ME?

BUT... WHY WOULD HE DO THAT??

WAIT... TOO MUCH HAPPENING ALL AT ONCE. GOT TO PULL MY THOUGHTS TOGETHER.

MY SUPER-SENSES REVEAL A LARGE VEHICLE PULLED UP TO THIS SITE WITHIN THE LAST SIX MONTHS.

IF THE TRAIL IS FRESH ENOUGH, I SHOULD BE ABLE TO FOLLOW IT, BACKTRACK WHOEVER TOOK THE ROCKET.

BUT... WHOEVER IT IS-- IF IT ISN'T PA-- THEY MAY ALREADY HAVE LEARNED MORE ABOUT ME THAN I EVEN KNOW MY...

MY SON.

YOU AGAIN!

AND THIS TIME I CAN UNDERSTAND YOU. SO HOLD IT RIGHT THERE, FRIEND. I DON'T KNOW WHAT WAS IN THAT ZAP YOU HIT ME WITH BEFORE...

... BUT YOU'D BETTER HAVE SOME PRETTY GOOD ANSWERS THIS TIME OR...

MY SON...

BE SILENT.

AND LEARN.

AHHGH-HGH!

16

IT'S...

...HAPPENING AGAIN! MY MIND... IS... EXPLODING WITH... A MILLION *ALIEN* IMAGES.

I... CAN'T... RESIST THEM...

FEEL... EVERYTHING... SLIPPING AWAY...

MY MIND...

MY...

...HUMANITY...

HURRY, JONATHAN! I SAW HIM FLY TOWARDS *THIS* FIELD AFTER LANA CALLED. HE'S GOT TO BE JUST OVER THAT RISE!

I'M DRIVIN' AS FAST AS I *DARE*, MARTHA!

THIS OL' BUCKET AIN'T NO *DUNE BUGGY*, Y'KNOW. I CAN'T...

LOOK!!

CLARK!!

P-PA!

ST-STAY BACK! DON'T GET NEAR HIM!!

17

THAT... THAT GHOST! WHAT IS IT?

IT'S *HURTING* CLARK!

STAY IN THE TRUCK, MARTHA.

AND BE READY TO DRIVE FOR HELP IF WE NEED IT!

NOW, YOU! GET AWAY FROM MY BOY!

ôïïøπ
íú=

GET AWA...

18

WHOUF!

FFZZT

POP!

WNNNNK

PA!!

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

WELL-- MY *SHOVEL'S* SEEN BETTER DAYS... BUT I SEEM TO BE *FINE*.

WHO--WHAT WAS THAT THING??

I'M NOT SURE. MY BEST GUESS IS SOME KIND OF SELF-POWERED *HOLOGRAPHIC PROJECTION*. WHATEVER IT WAS, IT WAS VASTLY MORE SOPHISTICATED THAN ANYTHING MODERN EARTH-SCIENCE COULD PRODUCE.

YOUR *METAL* SHOVEL BLADE MUST HAVE SHORTED IT OUT SOMEHOW. ONLY THE WOODEN HANDLE SAVED YOU FROM *ELECTROCUTION!*

IT SEEMED TO BE A-- *RECORDING* OF SOME KIND. BUT MORE THAN JUST A RECORDING, IT REACTED TO ME. IT-- *HE* CALLED ME HIS *SON*.

HIS...?!?

JONATHAN!

OH, HONEY! ARE YOU OKAY? I SAW THAT AWFUL FLASH OF *LIGHTNING*, AND...

I'M FINE, MA. BUT...

IT'S *CLARK* WE NEED TO WORRY ABOUT, ISN'T IT... *SON*?

I... I DON'T KNOW, PA. THERE'S SO MUCH *STUFF* ALL JUMBLED UP INSIDE MY HEAD.

I'VE GOT TO GO AWAY. FIND A PLACE FAR AWAY FROM THE REST OF THE WORLD.

I'VE GOT TO THINK!!

19

WHATEVER THAT HOLOGRAM MIGHT HAVE BEEN, IT FILLED MY HEAD WITH SO MUCH DATA, EVEN MY *SUPER-FAST* THOUGHT-PROCESSES ARE HAVING TROUBLE SORTING IT ALL OUT.

I'VE GOT TO ATTACK THIS PROBLEM *LOGICALLY*. I CAN'T SHAKE THE CONVICTION THAT IMAGE WAS *GENUINE*--

--THAT THE INFORMATION TRANSMITTED TO MY BRAIN WAS ALL *TRUE*--

--THAT I HAVE SEEN THE FACE OF MY *REAL FATHER!* IN AN IMAGE SENT IN THE ROCKET WITH ME.

BUT, SOMEHOW, THE RECORDING MUST HAVE BEEN DAMAGED WHEN THE ROCKET WAS MOVED, OR BACK WHEN IT FIRST LANDED ON...

...EARTH.

"ON EARTH."

I'VE NEVER THOUGHT OF IT IN THAT WAY BEFORE. MA AND PA ALWAYS SUPPOSED THE ROCKET WAS PART OF SOME *EARTH-BASED* SPACE PROGRAM.

THAT I MIGHT BE... *RUSSIAN.*

BUT NOW... YES. THAT WAS PART OF THE MESSAGE THE HOLOGRAM PLANTED IN MY MIND.

I'M *NOT* FROM ANYWHERE ON EARTH! JUST *ACKNOWLEDGING* THAT FACT OPENS MORE OF THE DATA--PUTS MORE INFORMATION IN CLEAR FOCUS.

THAT MAN-- JOR-EL--HE *WAS* MY REAL FATHER! AND THAT WOMAN--NOW I KNOW HER NAME WAS *LARA*--

--AND SHE WAS MY *REAL MOTHER!* AND THAT STRANGE ALIEN WORLD I SAW... THAT STERILE, ANTISEPTIC PLANET... THAT'S WHERE I WAS *CONCEIVED!*

ON THE PLANET... *KRYPTON!!*

A PLANET BILLIONS AND BILLIONS OF MILES OUT IN SPACE, BEYOND THE SOLAR SYSTEM, HOW FAR I CAN'T EVEN *GUESS!*

A PLANET THAT *DIED!* DIED IN A TERRIBLE FIERY HOLOCAUST THAT *SHATTERED THE WORLD...*

AND LEFT ONLY *ONE SURVIVOR, ME!!*

THAT WAS THE MESSAGE OF JOR-EL AND LARA! I AM THE *SOLE SURVIVOR OF THAT DOOMED PLANET, KRYPTON!!*

20

BUT, WHAT DOES ALL THIS MEAN TO ME, TO MY *LIFE*?

FOR TWENTY-EIGHT YEARS I'VE LIVED AS AN *EARTHMAN*, AS A *HUMAN BEING*!

I DEVELOPED THESE FANTASTIC *POWERS*, BUT I NEVER SUSPECTED IT WAS BECAUSE MY ORIGIN WAS *ALIEN*.

I SIMPLY THOUGHT I WAS SOME KIND OF... I DON'T KNOW... SOME KIND OF *MUTANT*.

NOW, ALL THAT IS GONE. THE MESSAGE OF JOR-EL IS CLEAR. MY BIRTHRIGHT LIES IN THE *STARS*!

IT'S NOT THE BLOOD OF *HOMO SAPIENS* THAT FLOWS IN MY VEINS. IT'S THE BLOOD OF A MILLION GENERATIONS OF THE PLANET KRYPTON.

ALL THAT WORLD'S HISTORY IS NOW WITHIN MY MEMORY, PLACED THERE BY THE LAST ACT OF MY REAL FATHER.

I CAN *QUOTE* FROM THE GREAT LITERATURE OF KRYPTON'S ANCIENT CULTURE.

I CAN *SUMMON* BEFORE MY MIND'S EYE THE GREAT WORKS OF ART.

I CAN *SPEAK* THE SEVEN LANGUAGES OF KRYPTON'S PROUDEST EPOCHS. I CAN *SING* BALLADS OF ITS HEROES.

I KNOW THE *NAME* OF KRYPTON'S GOD, AND ALL THE *PRAYERS* THAT PRAISED HIS NAME.

ALL THIS IS THE LAST GIFT OF JOR-EL TO HIS SON.

AND ALL OF IT IS ULTIMATELY *MEANINGLESS*.

21

I MAY HAVE BEEN *CONCEIVED* OUT THERE IN THE ENDLESS DEPTHS OF SPACE...

BUT I WAS *BORN* WHEN THE ROCKET OPENED, ON *EARTH*, IN *AMERICA*.

I'LL *CHERISH ALWAYS* THE MEMORIES JOR-EL AND LARA GAVE ME...

...BUT ONLY AS *CURIOUS MEMENTOS* OF A LIFE THAT *MIGHT HAVE BEEN*.

KRYPTON *BRED* ME, BUT IT WAS EARTH THAT GAVE ME ALL I *AM*. ALL THAT *MATTERS*.

IT WAS *KRYPTON* THAT MADE ME *SUPERMAN*...

...BUT IT IS THE *EARTH* THAT MAKES ME *HUMAN*!!

IT'S YOUR FIRST ISSUE,

1
JAN 87

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

SUPERMAN

--AND IT COULD BE YOUR LAST!

BY
BYRNE
& AUSTIN

SUPERMAN

HEART OF STONE

Created by JERRY SIEGEL & JOE SHUSTER

COME OUT, COME OUT WHOEVER YOU ARE!

John Byrne: story & pencils
Terry Austin: guest inker
John Costanza: letterer
Tom Ziuko: colorist
Andrew Helfer: Editor

HMM... NOBODY HOME. AND FROM THE *LOOKS* OF THIS PLACE... ...NOBODY'S *BEEN* HOME FOR *WEEKS*.

CURIOUS... WHY WOULD ANYONE *ABANDON* SUCH A FULLY EQUIPPED LABORATORY? ESPECIALLY AFTER GOING TO ALL THE *TROUBLE* OF LINING THE WALLS WITH *LEAD*. PRESUMABLY, THAT WAS INTENDED TO *BLOCK* MY *X-RAY VISION*.

"WITH TIME OUT FOR A FEW INTERRUPTIONS BY SUNDRY *SUPER-VILLAINS*, I'VE BEEN FOLLOWING THE TRAIL TO THIS PLACE FOR *THREE MONTHS* NOW.

"EVER SINCE I DISCOVERED THE *ROCKET* THAT BROUGHT ME TO EARTH FROM THE PLANET *KRYPTON*...

...*HAD BEEN STOLEN* FROM ITS HIDING PLACE IN ONE OF THE FIELDS OWNED BY MY ADOPTIVE *FATHER*."

FUNNY... IT'S *STILL HARD TO BELIEVE* MA AND PA KENT ARE NOT MY *REAL* PARENTS--THAT I'M ACTUALLY AN *ALIEN BEING*!

NOT THAT ALIENS--ESPECIALLY *HUMANOID* ALIENS--ARE ANYTHING *NEW* AROUND HERE.

IN ANY CASE, I *THINK* AND *FEEL* AS A *HUMAN BEING*, NOT AS A *KRYPTONIAN*.

HM. ANOTHER *LEAD-LINED* ROOM. I WONDER WHAT'S HIDDEN IN...

HAWKMAN IS AN ALIEN FROM THE PLANET *THANAGAR*.

AND *GREEN LANTERN* WAS GIVEN HIS POWER RING--EASILY THE MOST POWERFUL WEAPON IN THE *UNIVERSE*--BY A DYING ALIEN.

2

...HERE...

11·75

32·5

12·50

27·5

WHAT THE *HECK* HAVE I STUMBLED INTO??

THE FIRST CHURCH OF SUPERMAN?

THIS WHOLE *ROOM* IS LIKE SOME KIND OF *SHRINE* IN MY HONOR!

PICTURES OF ME. COMPUTER-GENERATED IMAGES. PRECISE MEASUREMENTS. MY HEIGHT. ESTIMATED WEIGHT.

SOMEBODY'S BEEN DEVOTING A GREAT DEAL OF TIME AND EFFORT TO *STUDYING* ME.

INCLUDING OBTAINING SOME *PHOTOGRAPHS!* THAT'S SOMETHING I'VE BEEN VERY CAREFUL TO *AVOID.*

I DON'T WANT TO RISK ANYONE BACK IN MY OLD HOME TOWN OF *SMALLVILLE* RECOGNIZING A PICTURE OF *SUPERMAN* AS THE MAN THEY KNEW AS *CLARK KENT.*

HOW COULD THE OWNER OF THIS PLACE GET A PHOTO OF ME, THEN, UNLESS...

YES. NOW THAT I THINK OF IT, THERE WAS THAT TIME A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO. I'D JUST COME OUT OF *METROPOLIS GENERAL HOSPITAL*, WHEN I SUDDENLY HAD THE DISTINCT IMPRESSION I'D BEEN *PHOTOGRAPHED.*

I WONDER IF...

HEL-LO...!!

3

DEAD. BEEN DEAD FOR ABOUT SIX WEEKS, I'D GUESS.

NECK'S BEEN BROKEN-- SNAPPED CLEAN THROUGH BY SOME ENORMOUSLY POWERFUL FORCE.

AND... YES, MY MICROSCOPIC VISION CONFIRMS HIS FINGERPRINTS ARE THE SAME AS THOSE I FOUND ON THE TRUCK OUTSIDE.

THE TRUCK WHOSE TRAIL LED ME HERE. THE TRUCK THAT CARRIED MY STOLEN ROCKET ACROSS THE COUNTRY FROM SMALLVILLE.

BUT... WHO ON EARTH COULD THIS MAN HAVE BEEN?

I'VE NEVER SEEN HIM BEFORE. NOT IN PERSON, NOR IN ANY OF THE PHOTO-FILES BACK AT THE DAILY PLANET, THE NEWSPAPER I WORK FOR IN MY TRUE IDENTITY.

THIS PLACE IS TURNING INTO ONE MYSTERY PILED ON TOP OF ANOTHER!

AND... WHAT'S THIS?

A LARGE VAT OF ACID!!

NOT A STRONG ENOUGH CORRO-SIVE TO EAT THROUGH THE METAL WALLS OF THE CONTAINER...

...OR TO HARM ME.

BUT ENOUGH TO HAVE DISSOLVED AWAY MOST OF WHAT--MAKE THAT WHOEVER--WAS DROPPED INTO IT.

THESE ARE FRAGMENTS OF HUMAN BONE!!

THIS IS GETTING VERY NASTY. AND VERY AWKWARD.

AS A DULY DEPUTIZED SPECIAL OPERATIVE OF THE METROPOLIS POLICE FORCE, I SHOULD CONTACT THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND REPORT ALL THIS.

BUT IT'S OBVIOUS OUR LATE FRIEND ON THE TABLE THERE KNEW MORE ABOUT MY SECRET ORIGINS THAN ANYONE IS SUPPOSED TO.

SO, UNTIL I CAN FIGURE OUT WHAT TO DO ABOUT ALL THIS...

4

...I'D BETTER FIND A WAY TO KEEP THE *WRONG PEOPLE*...

...FROM GETTING ANY KIND OF A *LOOK* AT THE *DATA* IN THIS PLACE.

AND, OFFHAND, THE BEST WAY I CAN THINK OF TO DO *THAT*...

...IS TO PUT THE WHOLE *STRUCTURE* BEYOND THE REACH OF PRYING EYES.

THERE! WHILE *BURROWING* AROUND THE LAB AT *SUPER-SPEED*, I'VE USED MY *HEAT-VISION* TO *FUSE* THE SILICATES IN THE SOIL INTO A *STEEL-HARD* BOWL A YARD THICK.

NOW I CAN *LIFT* THE ENTIRE COMPLEX...

...AND CARRY IT UP, UP, AND AWAY FROM MOTHER EARTH.

HMM...THE LAB SEEMS TO HAVE *LOST* ALMOST ALL ITS *WEIGHT* NOW THAT I'M *FLYING* RATHER THAN USING PURE *MUSCLE-POWER* TO LIFT.

I'VE NOTICED THIS EFFECT SEVERAL TIMES BEFORE.

EVIDENTLY, I *FLY OBJECTS* THE SAME WAY I *FLY MYSELF*.. BY SHEER *FORCE OF WILL*, NOT BY STRENGTH.

OKAY...WE'RE CLEAR OF EARTH'S *ATMOSPHERE*...

5

THERE!

I'VE POSITIONED THE WHOLE THING AT THE *LAGRANGE POINT*, WHERE THE GRAVITIES OF THE EARTH AND MOON COMBINE TO CREATE AN AREA OF *STABILITY*.

IT'LL HANG THERE *FOREVER*...

...OR UNTIL I *MOVE IT*.

THE NEAR-PERFECT *VACUUM* OF SPACE WILL PRESERVE ALL THE *CLUES* IN THE LAB...

...UNTIL I'M READY TO TURN THEM OVER TO THE POLICE.

BUT, RIGHT *NOW*...

...I'M ALMOST *LATE* FOR A VERY IMPORTANT *APPOINTMENT*.

ONE IT'S TAKEN ME *WEEKS* TO SET UP...

...AND ONE *CLARK KENT* HAS NO INTENTION OF *MISSING*!

WELL, *THERE* YOU ARE!

I WAS ABOUT READY TO GIVE UP ON YOU AND GO *HOME*, KENT.

OH, GIVE ME A BREAK, *LOIS*!

I'M ONLY *FOUR MINUTES* LATE!!

6

FOUR MINUTES CAN BE A *LIFETIME*, KENT. HOW LONG DID IT TAKE FOR THE *HINDENBURG* TO BLOW UP? FOR *OSWALD* TO SHOOT *KENNEDY*?

FOR SUPERMAN TO RESCUE THE *HOSTAGES* IN IMRAHAN?

I STAND *CHASTISED*.

ANYWAY... THANKS FOR WAITING SO LONG.

DON'T BE *CUTE*, KENT. YOU'RE HARD ENOUGH TO *RESIST* WITHOUT THOSE PUPPY-DOG LOOKS.

I ONLY WAITED BECAUSE YOU *WORKED* SO HARD TO CONVINCE ME TO JOIN YOU THIS MORNING... WELL, I FIGURED YOU'D EARNED FOUR MINUTES' WORTH OF *BROWNIE POINTS*.

THANKS.

I'M REALLY GLAD YOU AGREED TO COME, LOIS.

AND I'M *ESPECIALLY* PLEASED TO HEAR I'M SO HARD TO RESIST.

YEAH, WELL DON'T GET ALL *EXCITED*, CLARKIE-BOY.

DENIAL BUILDS *CHARACTER*. AND I'M GONNA BE DENYING *YOU* FOR A *LOOOONNG* TIME.

YOU DON'T MIND, THOUGH, IF I CONTINUE MY EFFORTS TO WEAR DOWN YOUR *RESISTANCE*?

IT'S YOUR LIFE, KENT. BUT UNLESS YOU KNOW OF SOME *MAGICAL* WAY TO TRANSFORM YOURSELF, SO YOU'RE NO LONGER THE *WEASEL* WHO BEAT ME TO THE FIRST *EXCLUSIVE* ON SUPERMAN...

...WELL, JUST DON'T HOLD YOUR BREATH!

OH, I CAN HOLD MY BREATH A *VERY* LONG TIME, LOIS.

AND, HEY, YOU'RE ALREADY CALLING ME A *WEASEL*. I CONSIDER THAT A STEP UP FROM *SWINE*.

SUIT YOURSELF, KENT.

NOW, C'MON, BIG BOY. LET'S SEE YOU WORK UP A LITTLE *SWEAT*!

IT'S *TOUGH* PLAYING THIS WAITING GAME WITH LOIS. SHE'S EASILY THE MOST *VIVACIOUS* WOMAN I'VE EVER KNOWN.

AND I *KNOW* SHE'D JUST *FALL* INTO MY ARMS IF SHE KNEW I'M ALSO *SUPERMAN*...

...BUT THAT WOULD BE TOO EASY. IF I'M GOING TO *WIN* HER, IT'S GOT TO BE AS *ME*, AS CLARK KENT.

BBRRAAANNNGGG

WHAT THE...?!?

7

THE AUTOMATIC *ALARM* AT THE COMMERCE BANK!

LOOKS LIKE SOMEBODY COULDN'T WAIT 'TIL *MONDAY* TO MAKE A WITHDRAWAL.

C'MON, KENT!

NOW, LOIS, YOU KNOW MR. WHITE HAS *WARNED* YOU REPEATEDLY ABOUT RISKING YOUR PRETTY NECK TO GET A STORY.

THERE ARE LIKELY TO BE *ARMED MEN* INSIDE THAT BANK!

AND *YOU* KNOW PERRY WHITE WAS THE GREATEST *AMBULANCE CHASER* OF HIS DAY, KENT.

HE DOESN'T *REALLY* EXPECT US TO SIT ON OUR HANDS WHILE THE *TV BOYS* BEAT US TO THE HOT STORIES.

NOW COME ON-- AND KEEP *QUIET*, FOR GOD'S SAKE!

LOOK! LOOK AT THE OUTER DOORS!

COMMERCE BANK OF

THEY'VE BEEN WRENCHED OFF THEIR HINGES! BENT ALL OUT OF SHAPE!

WOW! WHO-EVER'S IN HERE, HE MUST BE ALMOST AS *POWERFUL* AS *SUPERMAN!*

NO, MISS LANE.

MORE POWERFUL!

MUCH, *MUCH* MORE POWERFUL!

HEY!!

8

WHO IS THIS GUY?

HE'S BIG AS A HOUSE!

AND HE'S HURTING LOIS!

GOT TO DO SOMETHING.

DON'T DARE USE SUPERMAN'S STRENGTH...

BUT, LUCKILY, CLARK KENT "KEEPS IN SHAPE."

30% printed in England

SHUNK!

FOOL!!

UNGH!!

I DIDN'T EVEN FEEL THAT BLOW, BUT I'VE GOT TO PRETEND I DID. ROLL WITH IT.

IF I RESIST THE FORCE OF HIS SWING, HE'LL SHATTER HIS HAND!

IT ALSO GIVES ME THE CHANCE TO LET THE IMPACT "HURL" ME ACROSS THE BANK...

THERE'S STILL TIME

HOME IMPROVEMENT LOANS 11.3%

...WHERE I CAN LAND OUT OF SIGHT, BEHIND THE COUNTER!

9

DIDN'T YOU HEAR WHAT I SAID, KENT?

OH, YES. I KNOW WHO YOU ARE. *LOIS LANE* AND *CLARK KENT*. CRUSADING WRITERS FOR THE *DAILY PLANET*.

WELL, YOU'VE BOTH LUCKED INTO THE *ULTIMATE STORY*, THIS TIME.

THE STORY OF **METALLO!**

THE MAN WHO'S GONNA *KILL SUPERMAN!!*

"METALLO"?

YOU HAVE *GOT* TO BE *KIDDING!*

WHERE THE HECK DID YOU PICK UP A *CORNBALL* NAME LIKE *THAT*?

STEADY, NOW! DO NOT *EXERT* YOURSELF.

NOT YET.

MY *METALLO.*

MY *TRIUMPH!!*

DON'T MOCK ME, LANE.

I WASN'T *JOKING* WHEN I SAID I'M AS POWERFUL AS SUPERMAN!

ONE TINY *SQUEEZE* AND KENT WILL BE WRITING YOUR *OBITUARY!*

NO, I DON'T THINK SO.

PUT HER *DOWN*, MISTER.

NOW!

HAVE YOU OPENED YOUR *IRA* YET?

SUPERMAN!

I *KNEW* YOU'D COME! BREAKING INTO THIS BANK WAS *BOUND* TO LURE YOU HERE!

10

ALWAYS GLAD TO BE *OBLIGING.*

NOW, WHAT SAY YOU AND I TAKE A LITTLE *STROLL* DOWN TO THE NEAREST *PRECINCT HOUSE...*

OF COURSE, SUPERMAN.

ANYTHING YOU SAY.

BUT *FIRST...*

KRONG!

...WOW...

HE... MUST'VE BEEN *PULLING* HIS *PUNCH* BEFORE.

CAN'T *REMEMBER* THE LAST TIME I WAS HIT SO *HARD!*

WHONG!

IT WAS... ALMOST AS IF MY *INVULNERABILITY* FADED ON ME, FOR JUST A *MOMENT* THERE.

I STILL FEEL A LITTLE *DIZZY...*

BUT... CAN'T LET THAT SLOW ME DOWN. LOIS IS STILL IN THERE, *ALONE* WITH THAT CREEP!

GOT TO GET HER *CLEAR* BEFORE THE POLICE RESPOND TO THAT ALARM AND START SHOOTING UP THE PLACE!

NOT BAD FOR AN *AMATEUR*, PAL.

WANT TO TRY FOR *PROFESSIONAL* STANDING?

SUPERMAN! HOW *EAGERLY* YOU FLY TO YOUR *DEATH*!!

DON'T COUNT YOUR *CORPSES* BEFORE THEY *CROAK*, TOUGH GUY.

AS YOU MAY *NOTICE*, I'M NOT QUITE DEAD YET.

WOW! SUPERMAN'S REALLY *LAYING INTO* THIS GUY!

IF METALLO'S AS TOUGH AS HE SAYS HE IS, THE WHOLE *BUILDING'S* LIKELY TO COME DOWN 'ROUND THEIR EARS!

AND MINE, TOO!

GOT TO GET *CLARK* OUT OF THERE!

I HAVEN'T HEARD A *PEEP* OUT OF HIM SINCE METALLO PITCHED HIM ACROSS THE ROOM.

KENT!

KENT, ARE YOU...?

?!?

SUPERMAN MUST'VE GOT HIM OUT! TUNNELED IN, THEN DOUBLED BACK TO THE FRONT DOORS.

ONE MORE EXAMPLE OF KENT'S PHENOMENAL *LUCK.*

AND SPEAKING OF SUPERMAN...

HE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE *DOING* SO WELL...

COMMERCE BANK OF METROPOLIS
INTABANK TELLER
LOAN
PAY

I...DON'T *GET IT...*

I'VE GONE UP AGAINST GOONS *TWICE* THE SIZE OF THIS CLOWN AND NEVER EVEN *BLINKED.*

BUT... NOW IT FEELS AS IF MY POWERS ARE *DRAINING AWAY!*

YOU SEE, SUPERMAN? YOU SEE?

I *SAID* I WAS MORE POWERFUL THAN YOU. I SAID I WOULD *KILL* YOU.

AND NOW, I AM GOING TO *DO IT!*

ONE... QUESTION...

13

WHY??

WHAT...

WHAT HAVE YOU *DONE* TO ME?

I HAVE *SAVED* YOU! YOU ARE *REBORN!*

I DON'T *KNOW* YOU. I'VE NEVER *SEEN* YOU BEFORE.

LOOK! LOOK AT YOURSELF!

STRONG! POWERFUL!

WHY ATTACK ME? WHY TRY TO *KILL* ME?

MORE POWERFUL THAN ANY OTHER *HUMAN!*

MORE POWERFUL THAN *SUPERMAN* HIMSELF!

WHO *ARE* YOU, METALLO?

WHO??

AND SOON, SOON, YOU WILL *UNLEASH* YOUR POWER!

YOU WILL *KILL SUPERMAN!!*

14

"WHY?" "WHO?" THAT'S *TWO* QUESTIONS, SUPERMAN.

AND YOU KNOW SOMETHING...?

I DON'T FEEL LIKE ANSWERING *EITHER* OF THEM!

GUGHG!

TIME TO *DIE*, SUPERMAN!

WHAT... IS... HE... DOING TO ME?

ALL... MY POWERS... *FADING*...

NO... STRENGTH ...LEFT...

BANKCHECK

NEXT TELLER PLEASE

IT... CAN'T *END*... LIKE THIS!

IF... I COULD JUST... REGAIN... THE ADVANTAGE...

JUST FOR... ONE... SECOND...

HUH?!?

OKAY, CREEP!

GAME OVER!!

BRRRRR RRRRRRR RRRRRRR RAAAAAPPP!!!

15

SUPERMAN!

ARE YOU OKAY?

CAN YOU STAND?

PRIME RATE

I'M... GETTING *BETTER*, LOIS.

MY *STRENGTH* SEEMS TO BE RETURNING.

AND MY *SUPER-SENSES*, I DON'T HEAR A *HEARTBEAT* FROM METALLO.

THEN... HE'S *DEAD*?

IT'S OVER SO QUICKLY? WITHOUT EVER FINDING OUT WHO HE *REALLY* WAS?

OH, I'M SURE THE *POLICE* WILL BE ABLE TO UNCOVER HIS TRUE IDENTITY SOONER OR LATER, LOIS.

MY MAIN CONCERN IS FINDING OUT WHAT HE DID TO SAP MY POWERS LIKE THAT!

AND I'LL BE *HAPPY* TO *SHOW YOU*, SUPERMAN.

WHAT??

YOU'RE... *ALIVE*??

OF COURSE.

YOU STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND, DO YOU, SUPERMAN?

YOU *CAN'T* HURT ME. YOU CAN'T *KILL* ME.

BUT I'M GOING TO DO *BOTH* TO YOU!!

KILL SUPERMAN?

ARE YOU *CRAZY*, OLD MAN? NOBODY CAN DO THAT!

NO! ONE MAN CAN! *YOU* CAN! BECAUSE YOU WILL HAVE THE *ONE THING ON EARTH* THAT CAN *HARM* HIM!

KRYPTONITE!!

16

KRYPTONITE?
WHAT THE HELL IS THAT? I'VE NEVER EVEN HEARD..
OF COURSE YOU HAVEN'T. NO ONE HAS. NO ONE ON EARTH KNOWS IT EXISTS. NO ONE BUT ME!
EVEN SUPERMAN HIMSELF DOESN'T KNOW!

BUT I DO. AND I KNOW MORE THAN THAT! I KNOW SUPERMAN'S GREATEST SECRET!
I KNOW THAT SUPERMAN, GREAT DEFENDER OF TRUTH, JUSTICE AND THE AMERICAN WAY...
...IS REALLY AN INVADER FROM OUTER SPACE!!!

WHA-AT?? ARE YOU NUTS, OR...
NO! COME. LISTEN. FOR THIRTY-FIVE YEARS I'VE WATCHED THE SKIES!
WATCHED FOR THE MENACE I KNEW LAY OUT THERE. WATCHED AS MY FELLOW SCIENTISTS LAUGHED AT ME!

THEN, TWENTY-EIGHT YEARS AGO, I WAS PROVEN RIGHT! I SAW A SPACESHIP COME FROM OUT OF THE GREAT BLACK DEPTHS. I TRACKED IT ALL THE WAY DOWN TO EARTH, TO KANSAS.
THIS SPACE-SHIP!

THIS IS HOW SUPERMAN WAS SENT HERE! MUTATED INTO THE FORM OF AN INNOCENT CHILD.
FOUND, AND ADOPTED BY AN UNSUSPECTING HUMAN COUPLE, PLANTED IN OUR MIDST, LIKE A VIPER AT OUR BOSOM!

BUT--BUT I DON'T GET IT! EVEN IF WHAT YOU SAY IS TRUE, SUPERMAN IS THIS BIG-DEAL HERO!
YES HE IS! YES HE IS!!
DON'T ARGUE WITH ME! THEY'RE OUT THERE! BILLIONS OF THEM! ALIENS!
HE'S NO INVADER!

HIS REAL FATHER SENT A MESSAGE IN THE ROCKET. IT'S IN AN ALIEN LANGUAGE, BUT I'VE BEEN ABLE TO TRANSLATE A LITTLE OF IT, A TINY PART.
AND THAT PART SPEAKS OF SUPERMAN'S HOME PLANET, A WORLD CALLED KRYPTON.
AND OF THE DESTRUC-TION OF THE PLANET!

THE PLANET KRYPTON EXPLODED YEARS AGO.
AND I BELIEVE THE KRYPTONIANS SENT SCOUTS OUT INTO THE UNIVERSE, SEEKING WORLDS TO CONQUER.
SUPERMAN CAME HERE, TO EARTH.

BUT HE BROUGHT WITH HIM, ACCIDENTALLY I'M SURE, THE VERY INSTRUMENT OF HIS OWN DESTRUCTION.
A FRAGMENT OF HIS SHATTERED WORLD OF KRYPTON. AN ALIEN METAL I CALL...
...KRYPTONITE!

I'VE SPENT *YEARS* STUDYING ALL THE REALMS OF HUMAN SCIENCE, READYING MYSELF, WAITING FOR THIS DAY!

THE DAY I COULD SEND MY CHOSEN *WARRIOR* OUT INTO THE WORLD--WITH THIS PIECE OF KRYPTONITE AS AN *INEXHAUSTIBLE* POWER SUPPLY.

I'M NOT SOME HUMAN PUNK THE COPS CAN WASTE WITH THEIR SWAT TEAMS, SUPERMAN.

NOT ANY MORE!

OUFF!!

THERE! BY REPLACING THE *URANIUM* I HAD IN YOUR CHEST CAVITY WITH THIS KRYPTONITE...

...I GIVE YOU *MORE POWER THAN ANY HUMAN HAS EVER KNOWN!!*

I'VE BEEN *REBUILT.* MY HUMAN BODY WAS *CRIPPLED BEYOND REPAIR* IN AN AUTO WRECK.

BUT MY *BRAIN* SURVIVED. MY BRAIN *LIVES ON!!*

AND WITH THE FINAL ADDITION OF THESE PLASTEX *GLOVES* OVER YOUR ROBOT HANDS...

...YOUR DISGUISE IS *COMPLETE!* YOU ARE *METALLO!!*

I'M GONNA LIVE *FOREVER* NOW, SUPERMAN. THIS BODY WILL *NEVER WEAR OUT!*

NOT SO LONG AS IT'S POWERED BY MY *KRYPTONITE HEART!!*

"KRYPTON...??"

AND NOW I'M *ALL-POWERFUL?*

THEN I DON'T REALLY NEED *YOU* ANY MORE, DO I, OLD MAN?

WHAT?!?

NO!

DON'T--

UH-GUGK!!

KREK-K

YES, SUPERMAN, YES-- *KRYPTONITE!* A PIECE OF ROCK FROM YOUR PAST!

FROM THE ALIEN PLANET YOU WERE *BORN* ON!

WHAT?

18

MISTER L?

SORRY T'DISTURB YOU, BOSS, BUT THERE'S SOMETHIN' ON TH' TV I THOUGHT Y'OUGHTA SEE.

LIVE

QUITE ALL RIGHT, *PEARL*. I WAS NEARLY FINISHED HERE IN ANY EVENT.

WHAT IS IT?

CHANNEL EIGHT ACTION NEWS, BOSS. THEY'VE GOT A CREW DOWN T'THE COMMERCE BANK ON CENTENNIAL AVENUE.

SOME SUPER-PALOOKA'S KICKIN' THE *SPIT* OUTTA SUPERMAN!!

WHAT!?!

LIVE

ACTION 8

AN' THAT'S NOT ALL, BOSS. THIS *METALLO* GUY SAYS SUPES IS SOME KINDA *ALIEN BEING*.

AN' *METALLO*'S GOT SOMETHIN' THAT'S GONNA *KILL* HIM!

KILL... SUPERMAN...??

13:03

NO! NO, THAT WON'T DO AT ALL.

I HAVE *PROMISED* SUPERMAN THAT WHEN HE DIES IT WILL BE BY *MY HAND!*

AND *LEX LUTHOR* ALWAYS *KEERS* HIS PROMISES!!

19

SUPERMAN!!

SUPERMAN!!

C'MON, MISS LANE! YOU GOTTA GET CLEAR!

WITH THE MESS THEM TWO HAVE MADE OF THE BANK BUILDING, IT AIN'T GONNA BE STANDIN' MUCH...

...LONGER!!

FAYNE

S-SUPERMAN...

SUPERMAN?

...SUPERMAN...

HA HA HA HA HA HA!!

I'VE WON!! I'VE BEATEN HIM!!

...NO...

KRYPTONITE...

...OR NO KRYPTONITE...

...THIS ISN'T *OVER* YET...

HOW *PATHETIC!* DON'T YOU EVEN HAVE THE SENSE TO KNOW WHEN YOU'RE *FINISHED?*

YOU...TALK A GOOD... *DEATH SCENE...* METALLO...

BUT... SO FAR IT'S STILL... *JUST TALK...*

VERY WELL, SUPERMAN. KRYPTONITE VISION IS ONLY A *FRACTION* OF MY POWER.

NOW YOU CAN FEEL *THE REST!!*

CLIK

WHRRRRRRRR

AHHH!!

THE RADIATION FROM KRYPTONITE DRIVES THE *SOLAR RADIATION* OUT OF YOUR ALIEN CELLS, SUPERMAN.

IT DRIVES OUT THE *SOURCE* OF YOUR STRENGTH, YOUR POWERS.

AND IN ITS PLACE, IT FILLS YOU WITH GREEN, GLOWING *DEATH!!*

21

THE... PAIN... IS... INCREDIBLE!!

NEVER... FELT... ANYTHING... LIKE IT...

IT'S *POINTLESS* TO STRUGGLE, SUPERMAN.

IT'S ALL *OVER!*

YOU'VE HAD A GOOD RUN, BUT YOUR TIME'S *UP!!*

MY LIMBS... FEEL LIKE... *SILLY PUTTY.*

MY HEART'S... POUNDING... AS IF TO... *BURST.*

AFTER I WAS *REBORN*, I WANDERED FOR A WHILE. NO REAL *PURPOSE.*

BUT THEN I REALIZED MY *CREATOR* WAS *RIGHT*, IN THE *WRONG WAY.*

I HAVE THE POWER TO MAKE MYSELF *KING OF THE WORLD*, SUPERMAN.

AND KILLING YOU IS THE BEST WAY I KNOW TO *PROVE IT!*

CAN'T... SEE ANYTHING... BUT THAT... AWFUL *GREEN.*

BUT...

...CAN'T *GIVE UP.*

...CAN'T...

...GIVE...

AFTER *YOU*, THE REST IS *EASY.* AFTER YOU, EVERYTHING ELSE FALLS INTO...

HUH??

HUH?

HE'S... GONE...???

SUPERMAN!!

LOIS...

LOIS... WHAT HAPPENED?

METALLO...?

I DON'T KNOW! IT ALL HAPPENED SO *FAST!*

HE WAS STANDING OVER YOU... THEN THERE WAS A BIG BLACK... *SHADOW...*

AND HE WAS JUST... *GONE.*

BUT... SUPERMAN...

WHAT HE SAID. ABOUT YOU BEING... AN *ALIEN...*

IS...

IS...

IT'S *TRUE*, LOIS.

I'M NOT FROM *EARTH.* I GREW UP HERE, BUT I'M NATIVE TO A WORLD CALLED *KRYPTON.*

DOES IT... MAKE A *DIFFERENCE?*

NO... AT LEAST... I DON'T *THINK* IT DOES, BUT... BUT *WHY* DID YOU TRY TO *HIDE* IT FROM US ALL, SUPERMAN?

I DIDN'T.

I ONLY DISCOVERED THE *TRUTH* MYSELF, A FEW *WEEKS* AGO.

I'LL BE *HAPPY* TO TELL YOU ALL I KNOW ABOUT IT...

BUT... NOT JUST NOW, LOIS.

YOU'RE STILL WORRIED ABOUT METALLO?

IF HE SHOULD COME BACK...

THAT WORRIES ME A LOT LESS THAN THE LUMP OF *ROCK* IN HIS CHEST, LOIS.

WHAT HE SAID ABOUT KRYPTONITE WAS *TRUE.*

IT *COULD* KILL ME, WITH A LONG ENOUGH EXPOSURE. IT KILLED ALMOST EVERYONE ON *KRYPTON.*

AND IT'S *OUT THERE,* SOMEWHERE.

SOMEBODY *SNATCHED* METALLO TO *GET IT.*

AND I HAVE AN AWFUL FEELING I KNOW *WHO...*

END

23

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SUPERMAN® & THE TEEN TITANS®

ACTION COMICS®

584
JAN. 87

the MAN OF STEEL™ IS OUT FOR BLOOD--

--AND ONLY THIS MAN CAN STOP HIM!

BY JOHN BYRNE & DICK GIORDANO

IT'S AUTUMN IN THE BIG CITY!

HI! I'M CAROL SAMUELS, AND TODAY ON "SKYLINE," WE'LL LOOK AT THE SIGHTS AND SOUNDS OF THE LARGEST CITY IN THE NATION.

A CITY RENOWNED IN SONG AND FABLE. A CITY WITH MORE BUSTLE AND DRIVE THAN ANY TEN OTHER CITIES ROLLED INTO ONE.

THE CITY I'M PROUD TO CALL MY HOME TOWN!

MARLIN'S BOOKS 'n THINGS

HERE, IN THESE CONSTANTLY THRIVING BY-WAYS, A POPULATION EQUIVALENT TO A MEDIUM-SIZED COUNTRY SHOPS, EATS, LOVES AND LEARNS.

SOME CALL THEM HARD. SOME CALL THEM UNFRIENDLY.

BUT TO A NATIVE, OR A TOURIST WHO KNOWS WHERE TO LOOK, THEY CAN BE THE FRIENDLIEST PEOPLE ON EARTH!

THEY KNOW HOW TO HAVE FUN, THESE MODERN CLIFF-DWELLERS--

RED HOTS

--AND THERE'S NOT A LOT IN THE WORLD THAT SURPRISES...

WAIT A MINUTE! SOMETHING'S HAPPENING!

CAMERA 2, CAN YOU SEE...

OH, MY GOSH!!

LOOK! UP IN THE SKY!

IT'S A BIRD!

IT'S A PLANE!

NO! IT'S...

SUPERMAN!
Squatter!
John Byrne: storyteller
Dick Giordano: Embellisher
Tom Ziuko: colorist
John Costanza: letterer
Andrew Helfer: editor
created by:
JERRY SIEGEL & JOE SHUSTER
2

SHOOM!

KRAM!

KRAK!

WHAT... WHAT'S HE *DOING*?

HE'S *SMASHING* THROUGH ALL THE SKY-SCRAPERS!!

HE'S GONE *CRAZY!!*

SUPERMAN HAS GONE *MAD!!*

LOOK OUT!!

HOLY...!!

TH' WHOLE *TOP* OF THAT TOWER'S COMIN' DOWN ON TH' *STREET!!*

THERE'S *NO WAY* ALL THOSE PEDESTRIANS CAN GET *CLEAR* IN TIME!

CAN'T SOMEBODY *DO* SOMETHING?!?

SOMEBODY CAN SURE *TRY*, MA'AM.

--AND HIS *NAME* IS *CYBORG!!*

3

FIRST, I'VE GOTTA ATTACH MY *WHITE SOUND DISRUPTOR*...

...THEN FIRE MY *GRAPPLING LINE* UP TO THE TOP OF THE *UNDAMAGED* TOWERS...

... SO I CAN DO MY BEST *TARZAN* IMPRESSION, AND SWING UP INTO THE *MIDDLE* OF THIS FALLING *JUNK*...

...AND BLAST IT ALL TO *DUST* BEFORE IT HITS THE STREET!

IT *WORKED!*

SOME OF THOSE FOLKS DOWN BELOW MAY FIND THEMSELVES *ITCHING* AND *SNEEZING* FOR A WHILE...

...BUT THAT'S A WHOLE LOT BETTER'N BEING *DEAD.*

NOW...

...LET'S SEE IF WE CAN'T FIND OUT WHAT'S GOT *INTO* THE *MAN OF STEEL!*

4

HA HA HA HA HA!!

LOOK AT THEM SCATTER!

THE ANTS! THE PITIFUL, WORTHLESS LITTLE CREATURES!!

THEY STRUGGLE THROUGH THEIR MEANINGLESS LIVES AND NEVER *DREAM* OF *POWER*!!

POWER LIKE MINE!!

SUPERMAN! HEY! SUPERMAN!!

NO GOOD. HE'S *TRIPPING OUT* ON HIS OWN POWER!

DRUNK ON IT!

HE'S NOT EVEN GOING TO *NOTICE* ME...

...UNLESS I CAN *CATCH HIS ATTENTION.*

RUNK!

LIKE *SO!*

KONG!

WHO DARES?!?

WHO DARES ATTACK ME??!?

UH-OH...

SUPERMAN! IT'S ME, CYBORG! DON'T YOU KNOW ME?

TAKE IT EASY, MAN!

I'M HERE TO HELP YOU!

HELP ME?

HELP ME?!?

INSOLENT FOOL!!

KRKLLKLK!

YOU'LL EAT THOSE WORDS!

YOU'LL RUE THE DAY YOU WERE BORN!

BEFORE YOU DIE!!

"...RUE...?"

WHAT'S WITH THIS GUY?

I'VE ONLY MET HIM A COUPL'A TIMES BEFORE, BUT...

...HE DOESN'T EVEN SOUND LIKE...

OOFF!!

KRAN

6

YOU STUPID *FREAK!* DID YOU REALLY THINK YOUR WEAK, MECHANICAL BODY COULD STAND UP AGAINST *SUPERMAN'S?*

SKTZZAK!

AHHGH!

HE'S -- *CHOPPED* MY ROBOT ARM RIGHT *OFF!!*

IT DOESN'T REALLY *HURT,* BUT THAT KIND OF MASSIVE DAMAGE CAN *OVER-LOAD* MY CYBERNETIC SYSTEMS!

HA HA HA HA!!

BEG, CYBORG!

BEG FOR *MERCY!* BEG FOR THE *EASY DEATH* I SHALL *NOT* GRANT YOU!

HE'S -- COMPLETELY *OUT OF CONTROL!* HE'S GONNA --

UNGH!

--HE'S GONNA TEAR ME *APART* LIKE AN OLD *TINKER TOY!*

GOTTA *STOP* HIM --

-- BEFORE HE RIPS OFF SOMETHING THAT CAN'T BE *REPLACED!*

CAN YOU FEEL IT YET, CYBORG? CAN YOU FEEL YOUR *LIFE* SLIPPING AWAY?

FEEL HOW *HELPLESS* AND *TRAPPED* YOU ARE INSIDE A BODY THAT GROWS STEADILY *WEAKER!*

THAT GROWS MORE AND MORE *USELESS* WITH EACH PASSING MOMENT!!

ONE CHANCE...

...CAN'T *HURT* HIM... BUT MAYBE WITH... *FINGER LASER...*

TZAP!

DID IT!

THE SUDDEN BLAST CAUGHT HIM *OFF GUARD!*

7

ANIMAL!!
I'LL KILL YOU NOW!
KILL YOU!!
BANG!
AAHHGH!!
SYSTEM... OVERLOAD BUILDING.
I CAN FEEL IT!
THIS IS IT, TIN MAN.
SAY GOOD-BYE...
...TO EVERY-THING!
MUSTN'T... PANIC...
SYSTEM DAMAGE...
...MAKIN' ME... WOOZY...
BUT... GOTTA... HANG ON!!
YEAH...!
HANG ON!
SLOW MY... FALL...
SLOW IT FROM FATAL...
SKREEEEEEE
...TO PAINFUL!
OUFF!!
GOTTA...
...CALL THE REST OF THE TITANS.
CAN'T TRUST INTERNAL SYSTEMS.
TELEPHONE!
GOTTA REACH TELEPHONE...

BRRIIING!

BLUE MOON DETECTIVE AGENCY.

FEELING *TROUBLED* AND AT THE END OF YOUR *ROPE*? WELL, YOU CALLED *US*, SO YOU'RE NO *DOPE*.

WE'LL *RIGHT* THE *WRONGS* AND *SAVE* THE *DAY*...

WE'LL PUT YOU *BACK* ON THE PROPER *TRACK*... AND MAYBE EVEN *SCRATCH* YOUR *BACK*...

GARFIELD!

I SWEAR, I CAN'T LEAVE YOU IN CHARGE FOR *FIVE MINUTES* WITHOUT YOU GOING *GOOFY* ON ME!

SORRY ABOUT THAT, WONDY.

I'LL JUST-- ER-- *BUZZ OFF*...

ZZZZZZ

TITANS TOWER, WONDER GIRL SPEAKING.

I'M VERY SORRY FOR THAT... *WHAT?*

VIC? IS THAT REALLY *YOU?*

WHAT'S...??

NO!!

WE'RE *ON* OUR WAY!

C'MON, *CHANGELING!*

IT'S A *RED ALERT!*

A *SUPER* RED ALERT!

ZZZ??

HA! HA! HA!

TAXI

THIS IS TOO RICH!

COME OUT, ALL YOU SO-CALLED *SUPER-HEROES!* COME OUT AND *FACE* ME!

TEST YOUR *PUNY* POWERS AGAINST THE *MIGHTIEST*...

HUNH?

HEY, SUPES, BABY! DON'T KNOW JUST WHAT *GAME* YOU'RE PLAYING...

...BUT YOU JUST *DUMPED* ON ONE OF THE *CHARTER MEMBERS* OF THE ONE AN' ONLY *TEEN TITANS!*

AND WHEN THAT HAPPENS...

WE DUMP BACK!!

UNFH!!

GET THE *PICTURE*, BLUE-BOY?

DOLT!

DO YOU *REALLY* THINK ME SO EASILY UNDONE?

THIS IS NOT SOME PETTY, UNTRIED, SUPER-VILLAIN YOU'RE DEALING WITH.

NOW, AND FOREVER...

...I AM SUPERMAN!!

YOWLP!!

BAH! THIS IS *TOO EASY!* THE TEEN TITANS ARE *NOTHING* TO ME.

I NEED A *REAL* CHALLENGE.

AN OPPONENT *WORTHY* OF MY *GODLIKE MIGHT!*

HE'S... TOO POWERFUL. DIDN'T... HAVE A...

...CHANCE...

IT IS RIDICULOUS TO WASTE MY POWER AGAINST SUCH FOES AS THESE.

I HAVE NO INTEREST IN BATTLING *CHILDREN!*

WELL...

I MAY STILL *CALL* MYSELF A *GIRL*...

...BUT I THINK YOU'LL *AGREE*...

...I'M SOMETHING *CONSIDERABLY MORE* THAN A "*CHILD.*"

AFTER ALL, THERE ARE VERY *FEW* CHILDREN WHO CAN DO...

WHOOSH!

THIS!

?!?

HE DIDN'T EVEN *TRY* TO GET OUT OF THE WAY.

I DROVE HIM INTO THE GROUND LIKE A *TENT PEG!!*

I CAN'T HAVE *BEATEN* HIM SO...

HM...?

WHAT IN THE...?

OH-HH!!

HA HA!!

YOU'LL NEVER *LEARN*, YOU *INFERIOR* CREATURES!!

"INFERIOR"?

WELL, *EXCUSE ME*, FRIEND, BUT NOWADAYS US *LIBERATED* LADIES DON'T TAKE MUCH TO BEING CALLED *INFERIOR* BY A *MAN*.

NOT EVEN A *SUPER* MAN.

SO LET'S SEE IF WE CAN'T *TIE THIS UP* FAST NOW, SHALL WE?

13

MY *LASSO* IS MADE OF ONE OF THE *STRONGEST* POLYMERS KNOWN TO SCIENCE.

JUST *HOLD STILL*, SUPERMAN, AND IN A FEW QUICK CIRCLES...

...WE SHOULD TURN THE TABLES ON YOUR *EGO TRIP!*

MEANWHILE...

THE GRAMERCY STREET SCHOOL FOR THE HEARING-IMPAIRED...

IT'S SO *WONDERFUL* HE COULD COME...

YES. HAVING A REAL *SUPER-HERO*-- ESPECIALLY A *YOUNG* ONE--HELPING THE KIDS PRACTICE THEIR *AMESLAN*..*

DEAF KIDS AIN'T DUMMIES

* AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE-- EDITOR

... MAKES IT MUCH *EASIER* FOR THEM TO OVERCOME THEIR *HANDICAPS*, JUST AS *HE* HAS. I...

JERICHO!

JERICHO, LISTEN TO THE *RADIO*!

...SEEMS TO HAVE *BEATEN* AT LEAST *TWO* OF THE *TEEN TITANS*.

REPEATING THAT: AFTER A FURIOUS BATTLE, *SUPERMAN*, WHO HAS APPARENTLY TURNED *AGAINST* MANKIND, HAS BEATEN TWO MEMBERS OF THE *NEW TEEN TITANS*.

ONLY *WONDER GIRL* REMAINS TO STAND AGAINST HIM, AND WE CANNOT GUESS HOW LONG SHE CAN *SURVIVE*!

LEXCORP

JERICHO...?

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO *DO*??

WHAT DID HE *SIGN*?

THE BRAVE, BRAVE LAD! HE SIGNED, "*I'M GOING TO HELP-- OR DIE TRYING!*"

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STILL... CAN'T GET ANYTHING FUNCTIONING... AT MAXIMUM EFFICIENCY.

IF ONLY I HAD MY NEW *PROMETHIAN BODY*... THIS MIGHT NOT HAVE HAPPENED.

BUT--NO USE CRYIN' OVER SPILLED MILK. WONDER GIRL'S GONNA NEED HELP, SOONER OR LATER. AND CHANGELING IS STILL OUT FOR TH' COUNT.

OH NO!! HE'S BUSTED HER LASSO!

AND WITH HIS INCREDIBLE *SUPER-SPEED*, HE GRABBED HER BEFORE I EVEN SAW HIM *MOVE!*

FOOLISH, FOOLISH GIRL! HOW *EASY* IT WOULD BE TO *SNUFF OUT* YOUR LIFE NOW. BUT... BUT PERHAPS I *WON'T* KILL YOU.

NOT JUST *YET*, AT LEAST.

YOU'RE VERY *BEAUTIFUL*, WONDER GIRL. THERE ARE *OTHER* THINGS WE CAN DO *BEFORE* YOU *DIE*.

WE CAN LEARN IF A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN CAN *SUFFER*.

SUFFER AS *I* HAVE SUFFERED, SCOFFED AT BY ALL THE WORLD'S *BEAUTIFUL WOMEN*.

GOTTA *DO* SOMETHING!

CAN'T RISK USING ANY OF MY *WEAPONS SYSTEMS*. MIGHT HIT *HER*, TOO.

GOTTA *SMASH* INTO HIM, HARD AS I CAN WITH ONLY ONE LEG TO PROPEL ME. MAYBE GIVE HER A CHANCE TO GET *CLEAR!*

15

CYBORG!

WHAT?!?

WONDER GIRL! GET CLEAR! *MOVE!* WHILE YOU *CAN!*

MISERABLE, INTERFERING *SWINE!* DON'T YOU HAVE EVEN ENOUGH *SENSE* TO STAY OUT OF THE WAY??

YOU ESCAPED *ONCE* WITH YOUR LIFE, HALF-MAN.

YOU SHALL NOT DO SO A *SECOND TIME!*

NOW YOU **DIE!!**

UNGH!

MANAGED TO *ROLL* OUT OF THE WAY.

BUT CAN'T KEEP DOIN' THAT *FOREVER!*

I'M *DONE FOR!!*

KROM!

WHAT TH...?!?

SPLOT!

16

ANOTHER ONE! ANOTHER *IMBECILE* SEEKING A *SLOW* AND *PAINFUL* DEATH!

VERY WELL, *INFANT*. STEP CLOSER, AND LET ME...

BONES

CONTACT!

...LET ME...

...ME...

BE *CAREFUL*, JERICHO!

SUPERMAN IS AN *ALIEN BEING!* YOUR *MUTANT POWER* MAY NOT WORK ON *HIM!*

17

NHHAHHGHN.!!

GET OUT OF ME! GET OUT OF MY BODY.!!

RAGE ALL YOU LIKE, SUPERMAN. YOU'RE *STUCK!*

JERICHO'S POWER ALLOWS HIM TO ASSUME CONTROL OF THE *MOTOR REFLEXES* OF OTHER LIVING BEINGS.

YOU CAN STILL *THINK* AND *TALK*, BUT YOUR MUSCLES ARE UNDER *HIS* DIRECT CONTROL!

MY HANDS! THEY'RE... MOVING ...AGAINST MY *WILL!*

YEAH -- AND WHAT JERICHO JUST *SIGNED* MAKES A LOT OF *SENSE.*

SUPERMAN'S BODY'S *IS* DIFFERENT THAN YOUR AVERAGE HUMAN.' JERICHO CAN'T GET *TOTAL* CONTROL OF HIM!

SO HE CAN'T STAY IN THERE *FOREVER*, AND THE MOMENT HE COMES *OUT*, SUPERMAN WILL GO OFF ON HIS CRAZY *RAMPAGE* AGAIN.

WHAT ARE WE GONNA *DO*, WONDY? THERE'S NOT A *PRISON* ON EARTH THAT CAN HOLD *SUPERMAN!*

I KNOW, I KNOW. AND HE'S ONLY *VULNERABLE* TO *KRYPTONITE* AND *MAGIC*...

...NEITHER OF WHICH ARE AVAILABLE AT YOUR FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD DRUGSTORE.

YOU WON'T NEED *EITHER*, TITANS.

IT WILL BE *EASY ENOUGH* TO IMPRISON THE MAN RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL THIS *DESTRUCTION.*

YOU SEE, THE MAN RESPONSIBLE IS *NOT* SUPERMAN...

...BECAUSE *HE'S* NOT SUPERMAN.

I'M SUPERMAN!!

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WELL, I'VE HEARD SOME *STRANGE TALES* IN MY DAY, SUPES, BUT THIS ONE REALLY TAKES THE *BISCUIT!*

CARE TO *EXPLAIN* IN A LITTLE MORE *DETAIL?*

SUPES?

YOO, HOO!!

SOOOO-PERMAN!!

HMM?

OH... SORRY, CHANGELING. I'VE FLOWN OVER THIS TOWN ABOUT *TEN THOUSAND TIMES*, BUT I'VE NEVER BEEN *CARRIED* BEFORE.

IT'S-- *UNNERVING!!*

WELL, PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER, SUPERMAN. TELL US WHAT HAPPENED!

"*OF COURSE, WONDER GIRL. IT ALL STARTED WITH A TELEPHONE CALL TO CLARK KENT...*

"*THE CALL WAS FROM DAVID GUNDERSEN. HE CLAIMED TO BE AN AMATEUR SCIENTIST WHO NEEDED SUPERMAN'S HELP TO COMPLETE AN EXPERIMENT. IF THE EXPERIMENT WAS SUCCESSFUL, GUNDERSEN SAID IT WOULD CREATE A GREAT NEW, POLLUTION-FREE SOURCE OF ENERGY.*

YES, MR. GUNDERSEN. I UNDERSTAND YOUR SITUATION. I'LL DO WHAT I CAN TO *CONTACT* SUPERMAN FOR YOU.

"*KENT CONTACTED ME, AS PROMISED, AND I FLEW TO GUNDERSEN'S HOME.*"

SUPERMAN! I'M SO *PLEASED* YOU COULD COME!

ALWAYS GLAD TO HELP A *WORTHY CAUSE*, MR. GUNDERSEN. KENT TOLD ME THE BASICS OF YOUR INVENTION. IT SOUNDS PROMISING.

ALTHOUGH I'M AT A LOSS TO UNDERSTAND EXACTLY HOW I CAN BE OF ASSISTANCE...?

OH, THAT WILL BE MADE VERY CLEAR IN JUST A MOMENT, SUPERMAN.

VERY CLEAR...

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"IT WAS A TRAP.

"GUNDERSEN'S INVENTION HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH POLLUTION-FREE POWER.

"IT'S A MIND-TRANSFER DEVICE! IN A FRACTION OF A SECOND MY CONSCIOUSNESS, MY VERY SOUL, WAS RIPPED FROM ME...

"...AND SEALED INTO THE FRAIL, CRIPPLED BODY OF DAVID GUNDERSEN!

"WHILE GUNDERSEN BECAME SUPERMAN!"

YOU CAN STAY HERE IN THIS STOREROOM FOR NOW, "DAVID."

I WON'T *KILL* YOU. I'M NOT SURE WHAT *EFFECT* THAT WOULD HAVE ON THE *TRANSFERENCE*.

IN A FEW *DAYS*, I'LL COME BY WITH SOME *FOOD* AND *WATER*. BUT YOU'D BETTER GET *USED* TO THIS ROOM, SUPERMAN.

IT'S GOING TO BE YOUR *HOME* FOR THE *REST OF YOUR LIFE!!*

THIS END UP

OBVIOUSLY, YOU *ESCAPED*.

YES. I HAVEN'T FOUGHT *CRIME* ALL THESE YEARS WITHOUT PICKING UP A FEW *SHADY TRICKS*.

I *PICKED THE LOCK* ON THE DOOR. BUT, BY THEN, "*SUPERMAN'S*" RAMPAGE WAS ALL OVER THE *NEWS*.

WHEN I HEARD YOU *TITANS* WERE INVOLVED, I CALLED A *TAXI* AND HAD MYSELF DRIVEN TO THE *BATTLE-ZONE*-- ANOTHER *STRANGE* EXPERIENCE FOR ME!

BUT...

BUT, SUPERMAN! WHAT CAN WE DO *NOW*? HOW CAN WE GET THE TWO OF YOU *BACK* IN YOUR *PROPER* BODIES??

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THAT *SHOULD* BE *EASY*. I CHECKED THE *CONTROL CIRCUITRY* ON GUNDERSEN'S INFERNAL MACHINE BEFORE I LEFT HERE.

HE NEEDED SOMETHING HE COULD OPERATE *QUICKLY* AND *EFFICIENTLY*, BEFORE I HAD THE CHANCE TO REALIZE WHAT HE WAS UP TO.

SO IT'S A SIMPLE *ON-OFF* PROCESS.

A *FLIP* OF A *SWITCH* SHOULD PUT US BACK IN OUR PROPER *SELVES*...

...LIKE *SO!*

NOOOo!!

OKAY, *JERICHO*. YOU CAN *LEAVE* MY BODY NOW. AND... *THANKS!*

I'M... BACK...

BACK IN MY OWN *CRIPPLED, USELESS* BODY! *TRAPPED* AGAIN IN A WORLD THAT *SCORNS* ME! THAT *FORCES* ME INTO *OBSCURITY!!*

DON'T BE SO *QUICK* TO BLAME THE WORLD FOR YOUR PROBLEMS, GUNDERSEN. TRUE, THE *FATES* DEALT YOU A *ROTTEN* HAND...

...I'LL *NEVER* FORGET HOW IT FEELS TO BE INSIDE A BODY THAT DOESN'T *DO* WHAT YOU *WANT* IT TO.

BUT IT'S NOT YOUR *BODY* THAT MAKES YOU A *CRIPPLE*, GUNDERSEN.

HISTORY IS *FULL* OF MEN AND WOMEN WHO OVERCAME INCREDIBLE HANDICAPS.

HELEN KELLER, WHO BECAME ONE OF OUR GREATEST *AUTHORS*, EVEN THOUGH *BLIND, DEAF*, AND *MUTE*; *DOUGLAS BADER*, THE *LEGLESS* FIGHTER ACE OF WORLD WAR TWO; *FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT*, WHO BECAME *PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES*, EVEN THOUGH CONFINED TO A WHEELCHAIR.

AND *JERICHO*, HERE. HE CANNOT *SPEAK*, BUT THAT DID NOT STOP HIM FROM BECOMING A *SUPER-HERO!*

YOU TOOK *MY* POWERS AND BECAME NOTHING MORE THAN A COMMON *HOODLUM!*

NO--

IT'S NOT YOUR *BODY* THAT *CRIPPLES* YOU, GUNDERSEN. IT'S YOUR *MIND!*

ELSEWHERE:

PARIS, FRANCE. TEN HOURS LATER.

MONSIEUR L-- YOUR AMERICAN PAPERS.

THANK YOU, COLETTE. I SUPPOSE THEY'RE FULL OF THE USUAL DRIVEL ABOUT THAT POPPIN-JAY, SUPERMAN?

OUI, MONSIEUR. ZEE DAILY PLANET 'AS A FRONT PAGE STORY ABOUT ZEE BATTLE BETWEEN SUPAIRMAN AND ZEE TEEN TITANS!

MM. BY CLARK KENT, ALSO AS USUAL. FUNNY, LOIS LANE WAS THE HOTTEST REPORTER ON THE PLANET BEFORE KENT CAME ALONG.

AND NOW IT SEEMS SHE COMES IN SECOND ON ALL THE TOP STORIES -- AT LEAST THE ONES INVOLVING SUPERMAN.

DAILY PLANET

SUPERMAN EXONERATED

TITANS IN GOOD HEALTH SAY DOCTORS

HERO VICTIM OF "MIND SWITCH"

JERICHO DECLARED HERO OF HOUR

THAT'S SOMETHING THAT HADN'T REALLY OCCURRED TO ME UNTIL NOW. CLARK KENT ALWAYS GETS THE BEST SUPERMAN STORIES.

THERE MUST BE SOME KIND OF CONNECTION BETWEEN KENT AND SUPERMAN.

AND LEX LUTHOR IS JUST THE MAN TO FIND OUT EXACTLY WHAT THAT CONNECTION IS!!

DAILY PLANET

SUPERMAN EXONERATED

JOHN BYRNE & TERRY AUSTIN

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FEB. 87

SUPERMAN

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

THE SECRET REVEALED!

CLARK KENT IS SUPERMAN

SUPERMAN™

Created by JERRY SIEGEL & JOE SHUSTER

THE SECRET REVEALED!

JOHN BYRNE • TERRY AUSTIN • JOHN COSTANZA • TOM ZILIKO • ANDREW HELFER

story & pencils — inks — lettering — coloring — editing

SPECIAL THANKS TO KEITH WILLIAMS FOR BACKGROUND INKS

G-2906

THERE SHE IS, SIR!

WE DON'T HAVE THE *FOGGIEST* NOTION WHO SHE IS, OF COURSE.

BUT, WHEN WE STARTED OUR *COMPUTER-ENHANCED* ANALYSIS OF ALL AVAILABLE NEWS FOOTAGE OF *SUPERMAN* IN ACTION --

--THERE SHE WAS!

INTERESTING.

AND SHE WAS THERE FROM THE *START?*

NO, SIR. THERE'S NO SIGN OF HER IN ANY OF THE VISIBLE CROWD FOOTAGE FROM SUPERMAN'S FIRST PUBLIC APPEARANCE -- WHEN HE SAVED THE CRASHING *SPACE PLANE.*

SHE SEEMS TO TURN UP FIRST ABOUT THREE WEEKS AFTER HIS PUBLIC DEBUT.

FASCINATING. A *SUPER-GROUPIE,* DO YOU THINK?

OR SOMETHING *MORE* -- SOMEONE *CONNECTED* TO SUPERMAN.

A *LOVER.* A RELATIVE.

CAN YOU GIVE ME A *HARD COPY* OF THAT FACE?

OF COURSE.

HERE WE GO, SIR.

PHOTO SCAN PRINT

EXCELLENT.

VERY WELL -- ARMSTRONG'S SQUAD IS COVERING ALL THE PUBLIC APPEARANCES OF SUPERMAN...

...WHILE JENNER'S TEAM IS INVESTIGATING *CLARK KENT.*

DUNLOP! POOLE! I WANT YOU TO *FIND* THIS WOMAN!

THAT'S A PRETTY *TALL ORDER,* MR. L. WE CAN'T SEE ANY TRACE OF HER IN FOOTAGE LESS THAN SIX MONTHS OLD.

IT'S LIKE SHE JUST *VANISHED!*

THEN YOU WILL HAVE TO GIVE IT A LITTLE *EXTRA EFFORT*, WON'T YOU? THIS *PROJECT* IS ALREADY TWO WEEKS PAST MY ORIGINAL SCHEDULE.

I WILL NOT *TOLERATE* FURTHER DELAYS!

GET TO IT!

Y-YES, SIR!

AND, AS FOR YOU, *AMANDA*, I AM *WELL PLEASED!*

YOU MAY JOIN ME TONIGHT FOR-- *DINNER*. I'LL SEND SOMEONE 'ROUND TO YOUR QUARTERS WITH A SELECTION OF GOWNS FOR YOU TO CHOOSE FROM. AND SOMEONE TO DO YOUR *HAIR* FOR YOU.

OH...!

TH-THANK YOU, *MR. LUTHOR!* I'M *HONORED*, OF COURSE! BUT I HAVE A *PRIOR COMMITMENT.*

PERHAPS SOME OTHER TIME...?

PERHAPS YOU DID NOT *UNDERSTAND* ME, MY DEAR.

I SAID *TONIGHT!*

AO-OWW!!

Y-ES!

YES, SIR. TONIGHT.

VERY FOOLISH OF *AMANDA MCCOY* TO ATTEMPT TO DECLINE MY *INVITATION* LIKE THAT!

SHE'S BEEN WITH *LEXCORP* LONG ENOUGH TO KNOW MY SLIGHTEST *WORD* IS TO BE CONSIDERED A *COMMAND!*

FORTUNATELY FOR HER, IN THIS CASE, SHE IS THE MOST *BRILLIANT* COMPUTER SCIENTIST IN HER FIELD. I CAN OVERLOOK HER *GAFF--THIS TIME.*

NOW THEN, *HAPPERSEN!* EXPLAIN *YOUR* DELAY!

M-MISTER LUTHOR!

S-SIR--YOU SHOULDN'T BE HERE WITHOUT A *PROTECTIVE* SUIT.

THE *RADIATION* LEVELS...

...ARE QUITE WITHIN ACCEPTABLE TOLERANCES, HAPPERSEN.

ONE OF THE FIRST THINGS WE DETERMINED WAS THAT THIS SO-CALLED *KRYPTONITE* COULD NOT HARM *HUMAN BEINGS*.

NOW, GIVE ME YOUR *REPORT*.

ER...YES, SIR.

WELL--AS YOU KNOW, WE'VE BEEN STUDYING THIS "*METALLO*" CREATURE INTENSIVELY SINCE YOUR OPERATIVES *CAPTURED* HIM.*

SO FAR, OUR MOST *AMAZING* DISCOVERY IS THAT HE IS NOT *ENTIRELY* A ROBOT.

THERE'S A *LIVING HUMAN BRAIN* INSIDE THAT METAL SKULL.

I'D *DEDUCED* AS MUCH. GO ON.

*LUTHOR!

YOU FOOL! YOU STUPID *IDIOT!* YOU *STOPPED* ME! I COULD HAVE *KILLED HIM!*

BUT YOU STOPPED ME!

REMARKABLE! YOU LIFT YOUR HEAD--EVEN WITH THE *NEURO-NEUTRALIZERS* STILL ATTACHED.

OF COURSE I STOPPED YOU, METALLO. THE *KILLING OF SUPERMAN* IS A *PLEASURE* RESERVED FOR *MYSELF*.

*SUPERMAN #1.--ANDY

ARE YOU *MAD*?? YOU'RE JUST A *MAN!* RICH AND POWERFUL, YES. BUT ONLY *HUMAN!*

YOU DON'T STAND A *CHANCE* AGAINST HIM!

OH, BUT I *DO*, METALLO. AND YOU'VE *GIVEN IT* TO ME!

YOU'VE GIVEN ME *KRYPTONITE!*

ER--YES--WELL, THAT'S THE *PROBLEM* WE'RE NOW *ADDRESSING*, SIR.

THE KRYPTONITE IN METALLO'S CHEST CAVITY IS WHAT *POWERS* HIM.

WE CAN'T FIND A WAY TO *REMOVE* IT, WITHOUT *KILLING* HIM.

IS THAT *ALL*?

BUT, MY DEAR DOCTOR HAPPERSEN, THAT'S *EASY!*

SIMPLY DO...

...*THIS!!*

YEA-AAGHH!!

RIP!!

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AND THERE WE HAVE IT!

THE *SOLUTION* TO SUPERMAN, SENT DOWN FROM THE VERY *HEAVENS* THEMSELVES!

IF I WERE A *RELIGIOUS MAN*, I'D ALMOST SAY *GOD* WAS ON *OUR SIDE!*

I WANT A FULL ANALYSIS OF THIS SUBSTANCE IN MY HANDS NO LATER THAN *MIDNIGHT!*

IS THAT *CLEAR*, HAPPER-SEN?

Y-YES, MISTER LUTHOR!

TELL ME *AGAIN* WHY WE'RE DOING THIS, *JENNER*. HE'S JUST AN *OLD GUY*.

QUITCHER WHININ', *BREEN*. WE'RE SUPPOSED TA GET ALL THE *DOPE* WE CAN ON *CLARK KENT*.

AND THAT "*OLD GUY*" IS KENT'S *FATHER*.

ANYWAY, IT AIN'T F'R US T'ASK *WHY*. JUST T'*DO*!

SO DO!

DONE.

PHFFT!

THEP!

IS HE...?

HE'S *FINE*. I MIXED TH' DOSE ACCORDIN' T'THE *MEDICAL RECORDS* WE FOUND ON HIM OVER IN *SMALLVILLE*.

HE'LL HAVE A HELLUVA *HANG-OVER* WHEN HE WAKES UP IN ABOUT THREE HOURS, THOUGH.

NOW, C'MON. TH'OLD LADY MUST BE 'ROUND HERE SOMEWHERES.

KEEP YER *STINGER* HANDY.

WILL DO.

JONATHAN?

IS THAT Y...

...OOO...

OKAY--
SHE'S OUT
COLD.

GET BUSY.

I WANT THIS WHOLE HOUSE TURNED *INSIDE OUT.* I'LL START WITH THE BASEMENT.

MOVE IT!

OKAY, THEM OLD FOLKS'LL BE COMIN' 'ROUND IN ABOUT TWENNY MINUTES.

I FOUND KENT'S *HIGH SCHOOL YEARBOOK*, A WHOLE BUNCHA *FAMILY ALBUMS*...

...PLUS HIS *BIRTH CERTIFICATE.*

WHATCHOO GOT?

I FOUND *THIS* ABOUT TEN MINUTES AGO. IT'S A *SCRAPBOOK.* THE FIRST HALF IS FULL OF ALL KINDS OF STORIES ABOUT AVERTED *DISASTERS*...

THE SECOND HALF'S ALL CLIPPINGS ABOUT *SUPERMAN!*

SUPERMAN, HUH?

IF KENT'S PARENTS ARE *SUPERMAN FANS*, THAT COULD BE IMPORTANT.

I'M NOT *SURE.*

WE'RE SUPPOSED T'BE FINDIN' ANYTHIN' WE CAN ABOUT TH' *CONNECTION* BETWEEN CLARK KENT AN' SUPERMAN.

BRING IT!

OH, HI! I DIDN'T REALIZE JONATHAN AND MARTHA HAD COMP...

HEY!

WHO ARE YOU GUYS? WHERE ARE YOU GOING WITH THE KENTS' THINGS?

OH, SHIT!

PHFFT!

DROP HER!

OH-HHH!

WAY AHEAD OF YOU!

DAMN!

DO YOU THINK SHE MADE US?

IN BROAD DAYLIGHT? RIGHT OUT IN THE OPEN?

OF COURSE SHE MADE US, DIM-BULB.

WE CAN'T RISK HER YAKKIN' T'TH' COPS, AN' WE GOT NO KILL PERMISSION FER THIS JOB.

WE BETTER TAKE HER WITH US.

"BACK TO METROPOLIS!"

MORE WINE, MY DEAR?

ER...YES...

THANK YOU.

YOU SEEM ILL AT EASE, MY DEAR.

IS SOMETHING DISTRESSING YOU?

BRRR-TT BRRR-TT

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A MOMENT, MY DEAR, WHILE I ATTEND TO THIS *TELEPHONIC INTERRUPTION.*

AND FIND US A FRESH BOTTLE OF *DOM PERIGNON.*

ER...YES...

OH, LORD, WHAT AM I *DOING* HERE? I FEEL LIKE A *CHRISTMAS TURKEY...*

ALL TRUSSED UP IN THIS *RIDICULOUS* GOWN, THIS *FRIVOLOUS* HAIRDO. BUT--BUT IF I DON'T *PLAY ALONG...*

...I KNOW *FULL WELL* HE HAS THE POWER TO *DESTROY* ME--

--IN WAYS MUCH MORE *INSIDIOUS* THAN *DEATH!*

LUTHOR HERE.

WHAT? *WHAT?!?* THE *IDIOTS!* *TERMINATE* BOTH OF THEM, *AT ONCE!*

WHAT?

LOOK, I'M VERY *BUSY* HERE AT THE MOMENT. I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR...

...I SEE. THIS BETTER BE OF *ASTONISHING SIGNIFICANCE!*

I'LL BE RIGHT DOWN.

FORGIVE ME, AMANDA. A PRESSING MATTER OF *SECURITY* I MUST ATTEND TO AT ONCE.

AMUSE YOURSELF FOR A WHILE.

I'LL BE *BACK...*

"...AS SOON AS I CAN."

WELL? REPORT! WHAT'S SO IMPORTANT ABOUT THIS *WOMAN* THOSE TWO *FOOLS* BROUGHT IN WITH THEM?

BETTER IF YOU JUDGE THAT FOR *YOURSELF,* MR. L.

TAKE A *LOOK!*

WE'VE GOT THE USUAL SURVEILLANCE SCANNERS IN HER HOLDING CELL.

LEXCORP

LEXCORP

BREEN! JENNER! MY DEAR, DEAR CHAPS! HOW GOOD IT IS TO SEE YOU BOTH AGAIN!

HUH?

M-MR. L?

I--I THOUGHT WE WUZ IN T-TROUBLE...?

NONSENSE. NONSENSE! YOU HAVE DONE ME A GREAT SERVICE!

THERE WILL BE SPECIAL COMPENSATION IN YOUR PAY ENVELOPES NEXT WEEK.

ER--GEE!

THANKS, BOSS!

WELL, DON'T GET ALL JUBILANT JUST YET, LEX. THIS WOMAN MAY NOT BE AS MUCH USE TO YOU AS YOU'D HOPED.

HM? WHAT DO YOU MEAN, DOCTOR KELLEY?

EXPLAIN YOURSELF.

SHE HAD A BAD ALLERGIC REACTION TO THE KNOCK-OUT DART BREEN SHOT HER WITH, SO I RAN A FEW TESTS, JUST TO BE ON THE SAFE SIDE.

SHE HAS ALMOST NO TOLERANCE FOR DRUGS. IF WE TRY TO USE A TRUTH SERUM ON HER, SHE'LL BE DEAD BEFORE SHE CAN TELL US ANYTHING.

HMM. HOW UNFORTUNATE...

HOW TERRIBLY UNFORTUNATE...

...FOR HER...

HMMM...

EVERYTHING SEEMS TO BE *FUNCTIONING* AT MORE OR LESS *NORMAL* LEVELS.

NORMAL FOR *ME*, THAT IS.

I WAS SERIOUSLY CONCERNED FOR A WHILE THERE. AFTER MY FIRST EXPOSURE TO METALLO'S *KRYPTONITE* THE OTHER WEEK, IT TOOK SEVERAL DAYS FOR MY POWERS TO GET BACK UP TO SNUFF.

IT'S QUITE POSSIBLE A *KRYPTONITE* EXPOSURE TO THE STUFF COULD *STRIP* ME OF MY POWERS *PERMANENTLY!*

ALWAYS ASSUMING IT DIDN'T *KILL ME* FIRST. I WONDER IF I COULD...

HEL-LO...?

WHAT'S *THIS?*

WELL, WELL! IT'S SOME KIND OF AERIAL *TRACKING* DEVICE...

A "*FLYING EYE.*"

AND MY *X-RAY VISION* REVEALS IT TO BE A *VERY SOPHISTICATED* PIECE OF WORK.

IT'S EQUIPPED WITH *PROXIMITY SENSORS*-- SO I PROBABLY WON'T BE ABLE TO SIMPLY *PLUCK* IT OUT OF THE AIR.

LET'S SEE IF WE CAN DISCOVER JUST HOW *GOOD* IT IS.

NOT BAD, NOT BAD AT ALL.

IT'S KEEPING PACE WITH ME *EASILY*. IF THERE'S A *HUMAN HAND* AT THE CONTROLS, HE OR SHE IS PRETTY *SLICK*.

THAT WAS A CLOSE ONE.

IF THE COMPUTER BACK-UP HADN'T CUT IN *AUTOMATICALLY*, WE'VE *LOST* HIM.

SEE IF YOU CAN GET CLOSER. I'M LOSING *RESOLUTION* ON THE BIOMETRIC SCANNERS.

TRYING.

THE BIG "S" DOESN'T SEEM TO WANT US TO GET TOO *CLOSE*.

AND LOOK AT THE WAY HE KEEPS MOVING HIS HEAD-- *VIBRATING* IT ALMOST--AT *SUPER-SPEED*.

I CAN'T GET A CLEAR SHOT OF HIS *FACE*.

IT'S STILL WITH ME.

WELL, I HAVE MUCH *BETTER* THINGS TO DO TODAY THAN PLAY *TAG* WITH THIS NOSEY EIGHT-BALL.

AND THERE'S MY *SOLUTION!*

LUCKILY I ALWAYS CARRY A FEW *DOLLARS* INSIDE MY HOLLOW BELT BUCKLE.

GOOD AFTERNOON, SIR. I'D LIKE TO BUY YOUR *ENTIRE* STOCK!

S-SUPERMAN!!

NOW THEN--LET'S *START* BY LETTING OUR LITTLE FRIEND GET *CLOSER*...

...THEN, BY *RELEASING* ALL THE BALLOONS IN ITS PATH...

...I CAN *CONFUSE* THE PROXIMITY DETECTORS LONG ENOUGH...

...TO *SNAG* IT!

NOW, LET'S SEE WHAT WE'VE GOT...

BOOM

WOW!

ENOUGH... *HIGH EXPLOSIVE* IN THAT THING TO LEVEL A WHOLE *BLOCK!*

GOOD THING I WAS WELL *ABOVE* THE TOPS OF THE SKYSCRAPERS.

DON'T SEE ANY *MORE* OF THOSE LITTLE WIDGETS..

NOT WITHIN RANGE OF MY *TELE-SCOPIC VISION*, ANY-WAY.

GUESS THAT MEANS IT'S SAFE TO DUCK BACK DOWN BETWEEN THE TOWERS...

AND HEAD ON HOME TO MY *APARTMENT.*

OR RATHER...

CLARK KENT'S APARTMENT.

NOBODY IN THE OUTER HALL. I'LL JUST...

WHAT'S THIS...?

FOOTPRINTS. *BLOODY* FOOTPRINTS.

HUMAN BLOOD.

AND NOT MORE THAN AN HOUR OR SO OLD.

THEY LEAD TO THE DOOR OF MY APARTMENT, THEN BACK DOWN THE HALL TO THE CARETAKER'S BROOM CLOSET.

LET'S SEE *WHO* WE'VE *GOT* HERE...

OH MY GOD!

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LANA!?!

LANA LANG!!

C-CLARK...?

HELP ME...

PLEASE...

HELP ME...

DON'T LET THEM *FIND* ME...

LANA... HOW DID YOU *GET HERE?* WHAT... WHAT *HAPPENED* TO YOU?

OH... CLARK... IT WAS... *HORRIBLE!*

HORRIBLE!

THEY... THEY *KIDNAPPED* ME! THEY *TORTURED* ME!

BUT... *WHO??* *WHY??*

TAKE IT SLOW AND EASY, LANA. TRY TO TELL ME.

I DON'T *KNOW* WHO THEY WERE. I ONLY GOT A *GLIMPSE* OF THEM... THEN EVERYTHING WENT *BLACK.*

WHEN I CAME 'ROUND, I WAS BLINDFOLDED. THEN THEY STARTED... *HURTING* ME. THEY WANTED ME TO *TELL* THEM...

...TELL THEM EVERYTHING I KNOW ABOUT *YOU...*

ABOUT *SUPERMAN.*

OH, LANA! AND YOU DIDN'T *TELL* THEM?

YOU *SHOULD* HAVE. MY SECRET ISN'T *WORTH* YOU HAVING TO SUFFER LIKE THIS!

NO... YOU'RE *WRONG,* CLARK. YOU'RE *MORE* IMPORTANT THAN ME.

MORE IMPORTANT TO THE *WORLD.*

I DIDN'T TELL THEM ANYTHING. THEY HAD ME FOR NEARLY *TWO DAYS!*

BUT I DIDN'T TELL THEM. THEN... WHEN I WOKE UP THIS MORNING...

...THEY WERE *GONE!* I WAS ALL *ALONE.*

I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT ELSE TO DO... SO I CAME HERE... TO YOU.

OH, CLARK! YOU'VE GOT TO GO *AFTER* THEM! THEY MUST HAVE YOUR MA AND PA, TOO!!

14

HE'S ON HIS WAY, SIR! JUST AS YOU PREDICTED!

OF COURSE.

I'M STILL NOT EXACTLY CERTAIN WHAT THE CONNECTION IS BETWEEN KENT AND SUPERMAN...

...BUT WHEN I DISCOVERED OUR "MYSTERY WOMAN" WAS FROM KENT'S *HOME TOWN*, I KNEW SHE'D HEAD STRAIGHT FOR HIM IF I LET HER "*ESCAPE*".

AND, AS I HOPED, KENT CONTACTED SUPERMAN.

IS...ISN'T THIS VERY *DANGEROUS*, MISTER LUTHOR?

"*LEX*," MY DEAR. YOU MUST CALL ME "*LEX*," NOW.

AND, NO. IT'S NOT DANGEROUS. NOT TO *ME*. DURING THE NIGHT WE *MOVED* THE LANG WOMAN TO AN ABANDONED FACTORY COMPLEX IN *KINGSLAND PARK*.

THAT IS WHERE HER TRAIL WILL LEAD THE SO-CALLED *MAN OF STEEL*. AND WHILE HE'S THERE, I CAN COMPLETE A BIT OF REMAINING *BUSINESS*.

BUT--THIS PART OF THE OPERATION NEED BE OF NO CONCERN TO *YOU*, MY DEAR AMANDA.

IT'S TIME YOU CHECKED ON YOUR STAFF, I THINK.

BY NOW THEY SHOULD HAVE *COLLATED* ALL THE DATA WE GATHERED ON KENT AND SUPERMAN.

YES, S...

YES, LEX. I'LL GET RIGHT ON IT.

GOOD GIRL, *THOMPSON*! ARE BREEN AND JENNER IN POSITION?

YES, SIR. EVERYTHING IS SET!

EXCELLENT.

"*EXCELLENT!*"

WHERE ARE THEY?!!?

HOLY CRUD!! SUPERMAN!!

15

THE KENTS! WHAT HAVE YOU *DONE* WITH THEM? START *TALKING*, VERMIN...

...BEFORE I *SQUASH* YOU LIKE THE *BUGS* YOU ARE!

HUH?

WH-WHAT'RE YOU *TALKIN'* ABOUT, MAN?

WE DIDN'T...

FIRE

WANDERCOM

POST NO BILLS

NO TRES

WANDERCOM

BOOM!

LUTHOR!

YOU CRAWLING PIECE OF *SLIME!*

YOU'RE BEHIND THIS! I *KNOW* IT! I CAN *SMELL* IT!

"*BEHIND*"...?

BEHIND *WHAT*, DEAR BOY? I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT YOU'RE *TALKING* ABOUT.

I'M TALKING ABOUT KIDNAPPING, LUTHOR. KIDNAPPING, TORTURE --*MURDER*.

AND *THIS TIME* YOU'RE GOING TO *PAY*, LUTHOR.

YOU'RE NOT MAKING ANY *SENSE*, SUPERMAN. YOU'RE CLEARLY *OVERWROUGHT*.

WHY DON'T YOU HAVE A *SEAT*. SOME *BRANDY*, PERHAPS.

DON'T PLAY *INNOCENT*, LUTHOR.

THIS TIME YOU'VE...

YOU'VE...

UHH-HHH...

WHAT'S...

WHAT'S *WRONG* WITH...

...ME...

FEELING A LITTLE "*UNDER THE WEATHER*," ARE YOU?

I WONDER WHAT COULD *POSSIBLY* BE *WRONG* WITH AN *INVINCIBLE* CHAMPION SUCH AS YOURSELF?

PROBLEM, SUPERMAN?

17

I WONDER WHAT THE *SYMPTOMS* COULD BE? WEAKNESS IN THE KNEES, PERHAPS? BLURRED VISION?

TELL ME, SUPERMAN, DOES YOUR *STOMACH* FEEL AS IF YOU'VE SWALLOWED *RAZOR BLADES?*

K-KRYPTONITE!?!

DOES YOUR *SKULL* FEEL AS IF IT'S *LINED* WITH *SANDPAPER?*

DOES IT FEEL AT ALL *FAMILIAR?*

QUITE SO.

THE ONLY SUBSTANCE IN ALL THE WORLD THAT CAN *KILL* YOU, SUPERMAN. AND *I* HAVE IT!

HOW DOES *THAT* FEEL, OLD BOY? HOW DOES IT FEEL TO KNOW YOUR *LIFE* IS IN *MY HANDS?*

TO KNOW THAT ALL I HAVE TO DO IS *STAND* HERE...

AND THE *KRYPTONITE RADIATION* WILL DO THE REST.

BUT THAT'S *TOO EASY,* SUPERMAN.

THAT'S NOT THE WAY I WANT TO *PLAY* THIS LITTLE *GAME* OF OURS.

I WANT YOU TO *WORRY ABOUT IT,* SUPERMAN. I WANT YOU TO HAVE *NIGHTMARES.*

YES, SUPERMAN. I *WAS* BEHIND EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED IN THE LAST FEW DAYS. BUT ONLY YOU AND I KNOW IT, SUPERMAN.

THERE'S NO WAY ON *EARTH* YOU CAN CONNECT THE BURGLARY OF THE KENT HOME, OR THE KIDNAPPING OF THE LANG WOMAN, WITH *LEX LUTHOR,* SUPERMAN.

NOW GET OUT OF MY OFFICE...

BEFORE I CALL A COP!!

DAMN YOU, LUTHOR...

CLARK...

I...I DON'T KNOW WHAT I CAN SAY...

THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN SAY, LANA.

NOTHING AT ALL.

MA AND PA WERE THE MOST IMPORTANT PEOPLE IN THE WORLD TO ME.

THEY FOUND THE ROCKETSHIP THAT BROUGHT ME HERE AS A BABY FROM THE PLANET KRYPTON.

THEY WERE THE ONLY REAL PARENTS I'VE EVER KNOWN.

EVERYTHING I AM, I OWE TO THEM. THEY GAVE ME THE GUIDANCE, THE MORAL COURAGE, TO USE MY POWERS WISELY.

THEY TAUGHT ME TO LOVE THIS WORLD, TO LOVE HUMANKIND SO MUCH, THAT WHEN I FINALLY DISCOVERED MY TRUE, ALIEN ORIGIN, IT DIDN'T MATTER.

MA AND PA TAUGHT ME HOW TO BE HUMAN.

THEY WERE MY HOOK INTO THE REAL WORLD, LANA. THE ONLY PEOPLE WHO NEVER ASKED ANYTHING MORE FROM ME...

...THAN THAT I BE HAPPY IN THE LIFE I'D CHOSEN FOR MYSELF.

NO MAN OR WOMAN EVER HAD KINDER PARENTS...

...MORE LOVING PARENTS.

AND NOW...

THEY'RE GONE. AND THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO ABOUT IT.

SON?

19

M-MA! PA!
Y-YOU'RE HERE!
YOU'RE ALL RIGHT!?!
SURE WE ARE, SON.
I'M *SORRY*, CLARK. I DIDN'T THINK THE *MESSAGE* WE LEFT ON YOUR ANSWERING MACHINE WOULD *UPSET* YOU SO MUCH.
MESSAGE? ANSWERING MACHINE?
BUT... I FOUND LANA AS SOON AS I GOT BACK INTO TOWN. I DIDN'T HAVE TIME TO *CHECK* MY MESSAGES.
THEN...YOU DON'T *KNOW* ABOUT THOSE TWO MEN COMING HERE?
RANSACKING THE WHOLE HOUSE?
WE JUST GOT DONE *TIDYING UP* ABOUT FORTY MINUTES AGO.
WELL, I KNOW ABOUT *THAT*, YES. THE SAME MEN WHO DID IT KIDNAPPED LANA.
LANA! YOU POOR THING! LOOK AT YOU!
I'M... OKAY, MARTHA. WELL --NOT *OKAY*, OBVIOUSLY. BUT I'LL *SURVIVE*.
YOU SAID THEY RANSACKED THE HOUSE, PA? DID THEY *TAKE* ANYTHING?
NOTHING VALUABLE, SON. NOT *MONEY VALUE*, ANYHOW. YOUR OLD YEARBOOKS, SOME FAMILY ALBUMS. AND YOUR BIRTH CERTIFICATE.
WHO...WHO DID THIS, SON? DO YOU KNOW?
OH, I KNOW ALL RIGHT, *MA*.
"*WHO*" ISN'T WHAT *WORRIES* ME.
WHAT CONCERNS ME NOW IS *WHY*?
WHY DID HE SEND THOSE MEN TO STEAL SUCH THINGS?
WHAT IS HE GOING TO DO WITH THEM?
20

WELL, AMANDA? WHAT DO YOU *HAVE* FOR ME?

WELL, SI... I MEAN, *LEX*--WE TOOK ALL THE DATA COLLECTED BY YOUR TEAMS AND BROKE IT DOWN INTO SEVERAL CATEGORIES. THIS CREATED BLOCKS OF INFORMATION THE COMPUTER CAN *CROSS-REFERENCE*.

THE PHYSICAL DATA WAS EASIEST, OF COURSE. USING COMPUTER-ENHANCED IMAGING EQUIPMENT, WE WERE ABLE TO GET AN *ASSESSMENT* OF SUPERMAN'S *HEIGHT, WEIGHT, EYE COLOR, SKIN TONE*, ET CETERA. ALL ACCURATE TO WITHIN POINT-OH-NINE PERCENT!

THEN WE COLLATED ALL THE MATERIAL ON CLARK KENT. WE HAVE A GREAT DEAL MORE ON HIM THAN ON SUPERMAN, OF COURSE. SCHOOL REPORTS, MEDICAL HISTORY. IT'S INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT MR. KENT HAS NEVER *MISSED* A DAY OF SCHOOL OR WORK DUE TO ILLNESS. SO FAR AS WE CAN DETERMINE, HE'S NEVER HAD SO MUCH AS A *COLD*!

ONE OF THE MOST CURIOUS THINGS WE FOUND IS A *GAP* OF ABOUT FOUR YEARS IN HIS LIFE. FROM THE TIME HE LEFT *SMALLVILLE* TO THE DAY HE ENROLLED AT *METROPOLIS UNIVERSITY*, THERE'S NO SIGN OF HIM.

THE BEGINNING OF THAT GAP CORRESPONDS ALMOST EXACTLY TO THE EARLIER CLIPPINGS IN MARTHA KENT'S UNUSUAL *SCRAPBOOK*.

ALL VERY INTERESTING, I'M SURE--BUT NOT WHAT I'M *AFTER*. WHAT ABOUT THE APPARENT *CONNECTION* BETWEEN KENT AND SUPERMAN?

THAT'S WHAT THE COMPUTER SHOULD NOW *TELL* US, SIR.

ARE THEY FRIENDS? BROTHERS? COUSINS?

WHAT?

CLICK! CLICK! CLICK!

WHIRR! CLICK! WHIIR!

CLACK!

CLARK KENT IS SUPERMAN

OH MY GOODNESS!

THAT WOULD NEVER HAVE *OCCURRED* TO ME!

AND YET...

GIVEN THE BODY OF *EVIDENCE*...

IT'S SO *LOGICAL!* SO *FLAWLESSLY* LOGICAL!

LOGICAL?

IS IT?

TO A *MACHINE*, PERHAPS.

YES... A *SOULLESS* MACHINE MIGHT MAKE THAT DEDUCTION.

BUT NOT *LEX LUTHOR!*

I KNOW *BETTER!*

I KNOW THAT NO MAN WITH THE *POWER* OF *SUPERMAN* WOULD EVER *PRETEND* TO BE A MERE *HUMAN!*

SUCH POWER IS TO BE *CONSTANTLY EXPLOITED.*

SUCH POWER IS TO BE *USED!!*

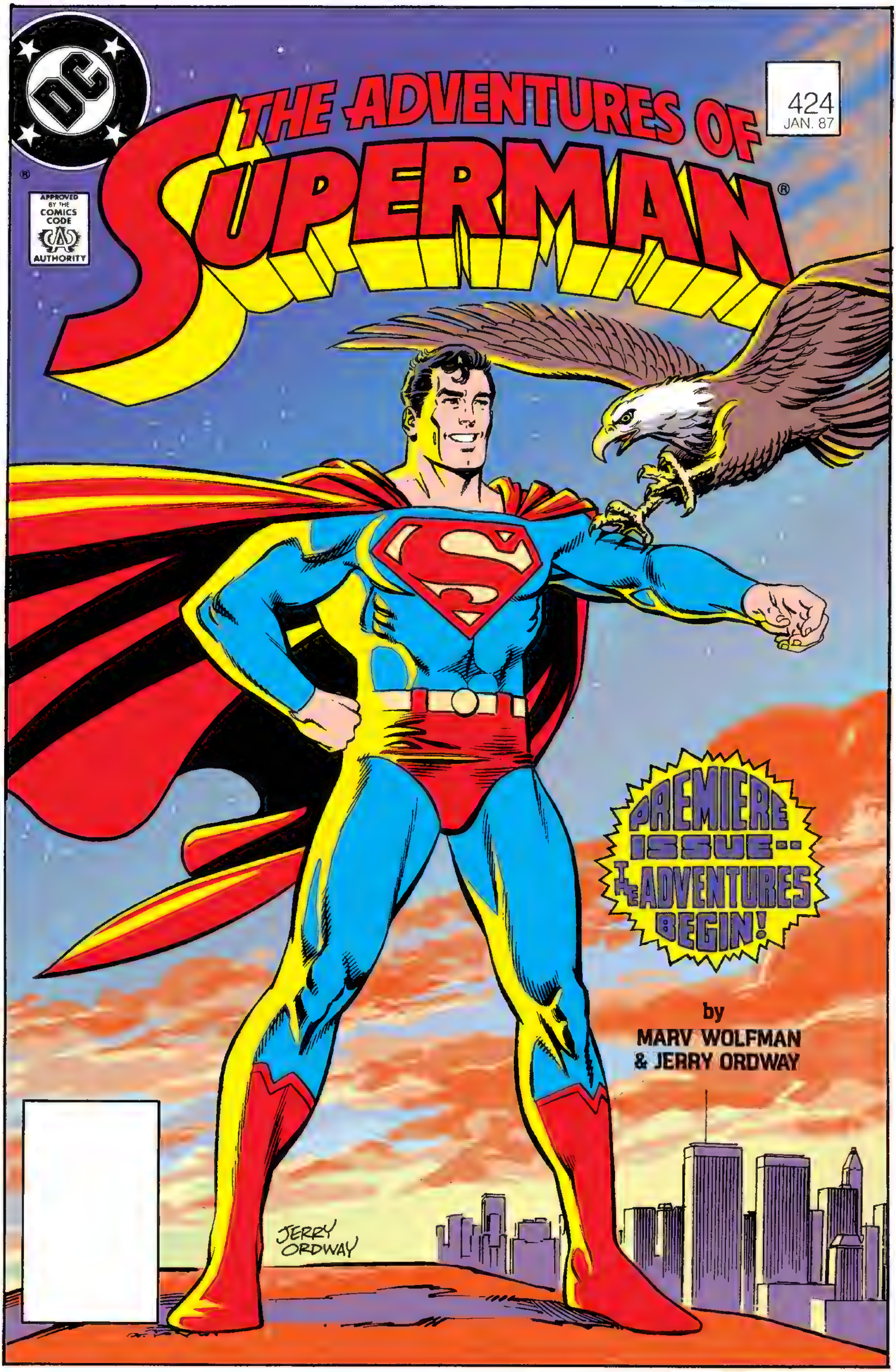
BUT... BUT IF THE DATA WAS *RELIABLE...*

YOU HAVE *FAILED ME,* AMANDA. THIS CONCLUSION IS UTTERLY *USELESS.* REMOVE IT FROM MY COMPUTERS *AT ONCE!*

AND THEN, REMOVE *YOURSELF!*

I HAVE NO PLACE IN MY ORGANIZATION FOR PEOPLE WHO CANNOT SEE THE *OBVIOUS!*

THE END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THE ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN®
424
JAN. 87
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
PREMIERE ISSUE--THE ADVENTURES BEGIN!
by
MARV WOLFMAN
& JERRY ORDWAY
JERRY ORDWAY

MY GOD, SHE LOOKS WORSE TODAY THAN EVER. I... DON'T EVEN THINK SHE KNOWS WE'RE HERE.

MOM'LL PULL THROUGH, LOIS. SHE *ALWAYS* DOES.

ELINORE, IF YOU CAN *HEAR* ME-- AND LORD KNOWS I PRAY YOU CAN--WE'RE HERE BESIDE YOU... *ALL* OF US.

WE'VE PUT ASIDE OUR DIFFERENCES, JUST AS YOU ALWAYS WANTED. WE'RE HERE FOR *YOU.*

DAMN! WHY DID THIS HAPPEN, ELLIE? WHY DID THEY SEND YOU TO THAT CHEMICAL PLANT? WHY DID IT HAVE TO *EXPLODE* JUST AS YOU ENTERED?

YOU WEREN'T SUPPOSED TO BE THERE. NOW YOU'RE *DYING* BECAUSE OF SOME LOUSY FREAK ACCIDENT THAT--

SAM... DON'T. DON'T GO ON.

LOIS, I THINK SOMETIMES WE'VE GOT A LOUSY *BLACK CLOUD* OVER THIS FAMILY. FIRST MY BLINDNESS, NOW THIS...

LUCY, HONEY, DON'T DO THIS TO YOURSELF.

YOU RECOVERED.

ARE YOU GOING TO TELL ME MOM'LL GET BETTER, TOO? IS *THAT* WHAT YOU'RE SAYING, LOIS?

I... NO... *NO.*

LUCY, I'M REALLY GLAD YOU CAME. I KNOW YOUR MOTHER *APPRECIATES* IT.

LOIS IS HERE TOO, DAD.

SAM KNOWS THAT, HON. HE JUST DOESN'T WANT TO ADMIT IT.

DAD, PLEASE... FOR MOM--LET US BE ONE HAPPY *FAMILY*... JUST FOR A *FEW MINUTES*.

PLEASE.

"YOU'VE GOT TO BE JOKING, ABU..."

...THAT FIFTH-RATE KHADDAFY SHOULD BE *THANKING* US IN HIS *PRAYERS* EACH NIGHT THAT WE ALLOW HIM TO *REMAIN* IN POWER.

WE CONTROL THE *OIL* IN YOUR COUNTRY. AND WE CONTROL YOUR *PRESIDENT.*

NO, MR. JOHNSON. THAT IS WHERE YOU ARE *WRONG.*

NOBODY, MR. JOHNSON. NOT YOU. NOT THE AMERICANS. NOT THE RUSSIANS. NOBODY CONTROLS US. WE ARE NOT ALIGNED WITH *ANY* POWER, ESPECIALLY NOT SOME UNITED STATES BUSINESS CORPORATION.

I SUGGEST YOU LEARN THE *TRUTH*, MR. JOHNSON, AS *BITTER* A PILL AS IT MAY BE.

AND, UNTIL YOU DO--

--GOOD DAY.

STINKING ARABS THINK THEY OWN THE WORLD.

LET'S GET ON TO *OTHER* BUSINESS, SHALL WE?

THE TAKEOVER OF TIMELESS PUBLICATIONS IS PROCEEDING AS PLANNED. WE'VE...

"NOW..."

BLEEP

...IT'S *TIME.*

"DISTANCE: 76 METERS AND CLOSING."

"IN POSITION AND LOCKED."

"AWAITING YOUR COMMAND."

"LOCK ON TARGET."

ZZZZWWHHCCCHHHMMM

2

"LIFE READINGS?"

SSKKKRRRR

"SINGLE BOARDROOM OCCUPIED. JANITORIAL STAFF ON HOLIDAY."

"PROCEED!"

KLIK

KLIK

THE ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN®

Created by JERRY SIEGEL & JOE SHUSTER

MAN O' WAR!

SSSKKRAAAAKKKKK

AND THE WALLS CAME TUMBLING DOWN.

MARV WOLFMAN • writer
JERRY ORDWAY • penciller
MIKE MACHLAN • inker
JOHN COSTANZA • letterer
TOM ZIUKO • colorist
ANDY HELFER • editor

3

RRRRRRKKKKHHRRRRRRRRRRAAARRR

"ACCOMPLISHED."

"LORD... WHAT A TRAGEDY..."

'SCUSE ME.

'SCUSE ME, PLEASE.

"TWO HUNDRED HOMELESS IN FLOOD." WHY DIDN'T THEY FIND SOME WAY TO *ALERT* ME? I COULD HAVE *HELPED*.

I SAID-- 'SCUSE ME.

WILL Y' PLEASE--

OH, HI.

HE'S GORGEOUS. IS HE AVAILABLE?

HI YOUR-SELF.

SHE'S BEAUTIFUL. IS SHE SINGLE?

OOPS...WASN'T PAYING ATTENTION.

HELP ME?

PRESS THE *STOP* BUTTON.

I CAN PULL YOUR LEG FREE.

THE STOP BUTTON WILL DO VERY NICELY, THANKS.

4

OKAY. IF THAT'S WHAT YOU'D RATHER.

UMMM, IT'S STILL RISING. ARE YOU HITTING IT?

NO, I'M *KISSING* IT. AHHH, THERE.

OOOPS.

OOPS.

I, UHH, LOST MY BALANCE. SORRY.

DON'T BE.

MAYBE WE CAN FALL FOR EACH OTHER AGAIN SOME DAY.

GOTTA RUSH, HANDSOME.

TA TA.

HE'S GORGEOUS.

"KENT--"

WOW!

SHE'S GORGEOUS.

-- COME IN HERE NOW I WANT YOU TO *MEET* SOMEONE.

LOIS, CAN YOU COME HERE, PLEASE.

V-J DAY

CLARK KENT, LOIS LANE, I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET THE *NEWEST* MEMBER OF THE PLANET STAFF--

PER WHITE

-- CATHERINE GRANT!

CALL ME CAT.

CLARK KENT, *HMMM?* LOOKS, MUSCLES...

...AND *TALENT.*

IRRESISTIBLE.

R.R.ING R.R.ING

5

YOU TWO *KNOW* EACH OTHER?

YOU COULD SAY WE 'VE TAKEN A *TRIP* TOGETHER.

CATHERINE GRANT, *HMMM?* I'VE READ YOUR *COLUMN* FOR YEARS. THE WAY YOU INTERVIEW THOSE *HOLLYWOOD* STARS... IT'S WONDERFUL.

YOU REALLY SEEM TO *KNOW* THEM SO WELL.

SOME OF THEM *BETTER* THAN OTHERS.

KENT, THIS IS FOR *YOU.*

I'VE *HEARD* HOW YOU GET SOME OF THOSE INTERVIEWS.

YOU DON'T HEAR *THEM* COMPLAINING, DO YOU, MISS LANE?

OR *ME,* FOR THAT MATTER. *MMMM?*

V-1

SO THAT'S CLARK KENT. HIS LAST *NOVEL* WAS... SCRUMPTIOUS.

YES, MR. GUNDERSEN. I UNDERSTAND YOUR SITUATION. I'LL DO WHAT I CAN TO CONTACT SUPERMAN FOR YOU.

HEY, CLARK-- SINCE PERRY WANTS US TO WORK *TOGETHER* ON THIS NEW STORY, WHY DON'T I *FILL* YOU IN ON IT... OVER LUNCH.

THE COSSAK TEA ROOM ALL RIGHT? *MMMM?*

HMMM. WATCH THOSE CALORIES, KENT.

LOIS, I HEARD ABOUT YOUR MOTHER. HOW IS SHE?

I'M NOT HERE TO TALK ABOUT MY *FAMILY,* PERRY.

WHY DID YOU HIRE HER? SHE'S A *SCANDAL MONGER.*

AND A VERY *GOOD* ONE AT THAT --WITH A *LARGE* FOLLOWING.

SHE'S *PERFECT* FOR THE NEW SUNDAY SUPPLEMENT MAGAZINE.

TRUST MY *INSTINCTS,* LOIS. AFTER ALL, I *HIRED* YOU, TOO-- WHEN YOU HAD *FEWER* CREDENTIALS.

6

LOIS, I KNOW YOU'RE CLOSED-MOUTHED ABOUT YOUR *FAMILY*, BUT I'M CONCERNED.

WHY DIDN'T YOU *TELL* US ABOUT YOUR ACCIDENT?

WHAT COULD YOU HAVE *DONE* ABOUT IT?

LIGHTEN YOUR WORK LOAD?

AND GIVE IT TO SOMEONE LIKE CATHY GRANT? NO.

NO WAY.

I DON'T NEED TIME OFF. I'LL BE *FINE*.

JUST FINE.

"WHAT'S GOING ON, CLARK?"

LOOKS LIKE--

THAT BUILDING *COLLAPSED*. BUT THEY WEREN'T TEARING IT DOWN WHEN I SAW IT LAST FRIDAY.

MOVE ON... MOVE ON. NO STOPPING.

OFFICER, WE'RE *REPORTERS* FROM THE DAILY PLANET.

WHAT HAPPENED HERE?

YOU'RE THE REPORTER. SEE FOR YOURSELF.

I CAN SEE. WHAT CAUSED IT?

HELL, MISTER, IT WAS A *BOMB* OF SOME KIND.

A TERRORIST *NUT* BOMB.

LOOK AT *THIS*.

I THOUGHT I HEARD SHALLOW, LABORED *BREATHING*. SOMEONE'S STILL *ALIVE*.

THE FREEDOM LEAGUE TAKES FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ACTION AGAINST THE IMPERIALIST WAR MONGERS FOR THEIR INVASION!

WHAT INVASION?

MISTER, I JUST SAW THAT ROCK *MOVE*. SOMEBODY MUST STILL BE *ALIVE* IN THERE!

UNDER THAT *RUBBLE*? YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING!

DANGER

I'M TELLING YOU...

LISTEN TO HIM.

CLARK KENT HAS A *THING* FOR HUNCHES-- HE'S GOTTEN SOME *INCREDIBLE STORIES* WORKING FROM THEM.

YOU WON'T *REGRET* IT. TRUST ME.

C'MON, HANDSOME. LET'S GO. WE STILL HAVE OUR *STORY*.

I KNOW. ONE MINUTE.

I DON'T LIKE WHAT MY *MICRO-SCOPIC VISION* IS PICKING UP. THERE ARE *GRAPPLER* MARKS IN THE *STONE*.

THE COLLAPSE WASN'T CAUSED BY AN *ORDINARY* EXPLOSION.

THERE WAS A SERIES OF SMALLER EXPLOSIONS SET ACROSS THE BUILDING'S *STRESS LINES*. WHOEVER THE FREEDOM LEAGUE IS, THEY KNEW WHAT THEY WERE DOING.

DOLLAR FOR YOUR THOUGHTS?

HUH? OH... JUST THINKING ABOUT *LUNCH*. AND YOU.

BEST DOLLAR I EVER SPENT.

"COORDINATES I.O. ARRIVAL TIME: 18 SECONDS.

"UNDER TARGET.

"PREPARE FOR EMERGENCE."

SKRAOOOM

"CITY HALL DIRECTLY AHEAD. EXPECTING RESISTANCE.

"ON THE COUNT OF THREE-- TERMINATE.

"ONE, TWO...

"...THREE!"

SKBLAM

TAXI

AMERICA, THE FREEDOM LEAGUE IS SICK OF YOUR WAR-MONGERING IMPERIALISM. WE NOW BRING THE BATTLE TO YOUR COUNTRY.

SO THIS IS HIS PLACE. IT'S...UH...NOT WHAT I EXPECTED.

USED TO BEVERLY HILLS GLAMOR?

...THEN WELCOME TO SUICIDE SLUM-- METROPOLIS' *INNER*-INNER CITY.

SO TELL ME, WHY *DID* YOU LEAVE SUNNY LOS ANGELES FOR A CITY KNOWN TO HAVE SIX-FOOT-HIGH SNOW DRIFTS IN JANUARY?

I RAN OUT OF SUSHI BARS TO EAT AT.

THE GOSSIP MONGER LIKES PRIVACY?

I'M SAVING IT ALL FOR MY *BOOK*.

BUT ANYTIME *YOU* WANT TO READ SOME PAGES...

MAYBE.

AH, THIS IS HIS APARTMENT.

SURE HOPE HE REMEMBERED OUR APPOINT-MENT.

9

WHAT DO YOU WANT? WHO ARE YOU?

CLARK KENT, FROM THE DAILY PLANET. YOU'RE PROFESSOR HAMILTON, AREN'T YOU? YOU CALLED *US*, REMEMBER?

YES, YES... WELL, WHAT *TOOK* YOU SO LONG? COME ON. COME IN.

I KNOW WHAT THIS PLACE LOOKS LIKE-- YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE *KIND* AND NOT SAY ANYTHING.

IF THE GOVERNMENT WEREN'T OUT TO *DISCREDIT* ME, I'D BE *OUT* OF THIS HOVEL AND IN A *LABORATORY* WHERE I BELONG.

BUT THAT'S WHY I ASKED YOU HERE, YOU SEE. TO LET PEOPLE *HEAR* MY STORY.

THE GOVERNMENT'S TRYING TO DISCREDIT YOU?

I, UH... FIND THAT HARD TO *BELIEVE*, PROFESSOR.

IT'S BEEN *KNOWN* TO HAPPEN.

OKAY, TELL US.

NO. I'LL DO BETTER.

I'LL *SHOW* YOU.

WATCH.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

DEMONSTRATING A PERFECT *DEFENSE SYSTEM* FOR OUR COUNTRY.

IT *WORKS!* EVEN MY SUPER-STRENGTH COULDN'T CRACK IT!

MY MACHINE HARNESSES *MAGNETIC WAVES!*

IT'S INEXPENSIVE, YET THOROUGHLY EFFECTIVE. LOOK.

BLAM

NO! DON'T!

NOTHING HAPPENED! CLARK'S SAFE!

AS SAFE AS OUR *COUNTRY* WOULD BE! BUT THE GOVERNMENT WON'T BELIEVE ME!

THEY'VE CUT OFF MY *FUNDING!*

THEY'VE PREVENTED MY GOING *ELSEWHERE* FOR MONEY.

HOLD ON, MR. KENT. LET ME *FREE* YOU.

THANKS... IT WAS A LITTLE...*CLAUS-TROPHOBIC*... IN THERE.

BUT, THAT ASIDE...IT'S AN AMAZING INVENTION, PROFESSOR.

WHY DO YOU THINK THE GOVERNMENT HAS DONE THIS TO YOU?

THEIR SCIENTISTS INSIST THAT THE WAY I USE MAGNETIC CURRENTS IS *DANGEROUS*. BUT, WITH PROPER FUNDING...

EH... PICKING UP *NOISE*...DOWN-TOWN. NEAR *CITY HALL*.

YOU IN THERE... BACK AWAY, OR WE OPEN FIRE!

POLICE

POLICE

PULL AROUND! CALL FOR REINFORCE-MENTS!

WE NEED *HELP* OUT HERE!

11

CLARK, I THINK WE HAVE A STORY FOR--

CLARK?

CLARK?

SOME KIND OF *ROBOT* IS ATTACKING CITY HALL! I'M PICKING UP SEVERAL *HEART-BEATS* FROM INSIDE, SO IT'S *MANUALLY* CONTROLLED. LEAD SHIELDING PREVENTS ME FROM TELLING *WHO'S* INSIDE.

IF IT WERE CONTROLLED *REMOTELY*, I'D HAVE NO QUALMS ABOUT DESTROYING IT. BUT I CAN'T DO THAT NOW.

WONDER IF THIS IS WHAT DESTROYED THAT OFFICE BUILDING WE SAW? IT WOULD MAKE SENSE.

WELL, I CAN STOP SPECULATING. I'LL HAVE MY ANSWERS ONCE I OPEN UP THAT OVERSIZED SARDINE CAN!

12

THE AMERICAN IMPERIALISTIC FORCES HAVE SLAIN UNTOLD NUMBERS OF OUR COUNTRY-MEN. IT IS FAIR THAT THE FREEDOM LEAGUE SEEKS RETRIBUTION.

NO WAY, PAL--NOT IN MY TOWN.

IN FACT, NOT IN MY *COUNTRY!*

"GENERATE FULL INTENSITY PLASMA REPELLENT. .08 DEGREES SOUTH. INITIATE GRAPPLERS."

WHOOOOF!

WHOOOM

OKAYYY, WASN'T PREPARED FOR ANYTHING OF THAT POWER.

BUT I *KNOW* BETTER NOW.

IF I CAN *BRACE* MYSELF FOR A SECON--

THEY DON'T *REALLY* BELIEVE THESE METAL BANDS CAN *HOLD* ME, DO THEY?

JUST NEED A MOMENT TO *STRETCH* THEM APART...

WHOOOM

THEY DIDN'T *GIVE* ME A MOMENT.

AMERICA'S TERRORIST ACTIVITIES ARE ANSWERED IN KIND. WE BRING AMERICA'S WAR TO ITS OWN SHORES.

TOOK HALF THIS OFFICE BUILDING DOWN WITH ME. IF IT WEREN'T *SUNDAY*, PEOPLE COULD HAVE BEEN HURT.

JUST WHO'S *BEHIND* THE FREEDOM LEAGUE? WHAT'S THIS *WAR* THEY KEEP TALKING ABOUT?

"PLASMA REPELLENT. FULL INTENSITY."

"POWER AT EIGHTY-NINE PERCENT."

13

"ACKNOWLEDGED. FIRE!"

WHOOOOM

"POWER AT SEVENTY-THREE PERCENT. DROPPING."

I'M *AWARE* OF THAT, FIVE. REBUILD POWER WITH NUMBER ELEVEN AND THIRTEEN.

INITIATING. POWER LEVEL INCREASING TO EIGHTY-THREE... NINETY-TWO... *COMPLETE.*

I'M *SORRY* ABOUT ELEVEN. I KNOW WHAT HE *MEANT* TO YOU.

HE UNDERSTOOD THE RISKS. SO DO I.

I'M *NEXT*, AREN'T I?

UH HUH.

THANK YOU.

"THIS MUST WEIGH MORE THAN EIGHTY *TONS.*"

HEAVY... THE TWO ATTACKS KNOCKED THE *WIND* OUT OF ME. CRUSHING DOWN...

OH, NO... UPPER LEVELS FALLING ON *TOP*... JUST WHAT I NEEDED.

ALL RIGHT... FORGET THE *PAIN*. FORGET THE WEIGHT. JUST *BREATHE* IN SLOWLY.

DO WHAT I *HAVE* TO DO.

FORGET THE PAIN. THINK ABOUT WHAT'S *IMPORTANT*.

I CAN *MOVE* THIS... ONE INCH AT A TIME IF NEED BE, BUT I CAN *LIFT* IT...

14

CAN'T BE STOPPED BY THE PAIN... CAN'T BE STOPPED BY THE WEIGHT. JUST KEEP *PUSHING*...

THE STONES WILL *MOVE*... KEEP PUSHING ...ONE BY ONE THEY'LL FALL ASIDE. KEEP PUSHING...

THERE! I DID--

UH, OH.

WRHHUUUUNNNNCCHHHHHH

I DON'T BELIEVE IT, BUT IT GOT SUPERMAN!

SHOOT IT!

IT GOT SUPERMAN, AND YOU THINK *BULLETS* WILL STOP IT? McGREGOR, WHAT'VE YOU GOT FOR *BRAINS*?

WE NEED *REINFORCE-MENTS!*

REALLY? LIKE WHO? THE GHOSTBUSTERS? RAMBO? SCHWARZENEGGER, SIGOURNEY WEAVER? TELL ME WHO I CAN FIND TO *STOP* THAT THING AND I'LL *GET* 'IM!

"NO, DON'T START CRYING AGAIN, LUCY."

15

I KNOW SHE'S GETTING WORSE, HONEY. I'M SURE THE DOCTORS ARE DOING ALL THEY CAN.

JUST DON'T FALL APART ON ME NOW. WE NEED YOU, LUCY.

OH, HI, MISS LANE... SORRY, I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE BUSY. THE CHIEF SAYS--

LUCY, I'VE GOT WORK TO TAKE CARE OF. YEAH, OF COURSE I'LL BE AT THE HOSPITAL TONIGHT-- RIGHT AFTER WORK.

PULITZER PRIZE

ARE YOU OKAY, MISS LANE?

MISS LANE?

THE CHIEF WANTED TO SEE YOU, MISS LANE. RIGHT AWAY. PRONTO.

MISS LANE? JEEPERS!

LUCY'LL NEVER MAKE IT THROUGH ALL THIS. IF MOM DIES, SHE'LL COMPLETELY FALL APART.

ALTHOUGH SHE REGAINED HER SIGHT, SHE'S NEVER FULLY RECOVERED FROM THE PSYCHOLOGICAL SHOCK OF BEING SO HELPLESS.

MISS LANE? PLEASE COME THIS WAY.

WHO ARE YOU? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

DAILY PLANET

MY EMPLOYER WISHES TO SPEAK WITH YOU.

EMPLOY-- YOU MEAN YOUR CRIME BOSS-- LEX LUTHOR.

HANDS OFF, MISTER, IF YOU WANT TO KEEP THEM.

I APOLOGIZE FOR THIS IN ADVANCE, MISS LANE, BUT MR. LUTHOR INSISTED HE HAD TO SEE YOU.

WHA--!?

LET ME OUT OF HERE RIGHT NOW.

LET ME OUT!

LUTHOR... YOU MISERABLE, OVER-BLOATED--

N... NO. NO SHOUTING. NO THREATS. NOT NOW, AT LEAST. I'LL WAIT UNTIL I SEE YOU IN PERSON, LEX.

THIS TIME I'VE GOT YOU WHERE I WANT YOU.

ASSAULT AND BATTERY. KIDNAPPING. TRY BEATING THOSE CHARGES.

"MCGREGOR, YOU SEE SOMETHING MOVING IN THAT RUBBLE?"

16

KWONK!

WHEW. THAT CERTAINLY TOOK LONG ENOUGH.

SUPERMAN? I THOUGHT THAT THING *GOT* YOU. YOU ALL RIGHT?

I'M FINE, THANKS, OFFICER, BUT I SUGGEST YOU CALL AN *AMBULANCE* FOR THE POLICEMAN TRAPPED UNDER THAT RETAINING WALL.

METRO POLICE

MAN? WHAT MAN?

HE'LL BE ALL RIGHT, BUT HE'S GOT MULTIPLE FRACTURES ON HIS LEFT SIDE AND BOTH LEGS.

THANKS, SUPERMAN... THEY'D NEVER HAVE FOUND ME WITHOUT YOU.

IT'S MY PLEASURE.

KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK, OFFICER.

YEAH, SUPERMAN. YOU, TOO.

OH, JEEZ, WHAT A JERK. I HAD 'IM HERE AND I DIDN'T ASK FOR HIS *AUTOGRAPH.*

NOBODY'LL BELIEVE ME NOW.

NO SIGN OF THE TANK... NO *TREADS* TO FOLLOW, NO DAMAGE OR LEAKS TO TRACE.

I'M LEFT WITH NO CLUES.

BUT THE *POLICE* MAY KNOW SOMETHING I DON'T.

IT'S ABOUT TIME TO COMPARE NOTES.

TAP TAP

SUPERMAN? YOU OKAY? I JUST HEARD THE REPORT.

I'M FINE THANKS, BILL. HOW'S MADDIE AND THE KIDS?

THE SAME. ONE OF THESE DAYS YOU'LL *HAVE* TO COME OVER FOR DINNER AGAIN.

I'LL TRY. SO WHAT'S THE REPORT?

WE'VE HEARD FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT, AND THEY FEEL WE'RE DEALING WITH QURAC TERRORISTS.

THEY'VE STEPPED UP THEIR ATTACKS SINCE THE PROMETHIUM INCIDENT A FEW WEEKS BACK.

OF COURSE, MARCO DENIES HIS GOVERNMENT'S CONNECTION. BUT THEN, HE *ALWAYS* DOES.

QURAC. THEY SEEM TO BE COMPETING WITH LIBYA AND SYRIA FOR THE WORLD'S MOST CRAZED TERRORIST NATION.

INSPECTOR HENDERSON? THE DAILY PLANET'S REPORTING AN ATTACK...

SUPERMAN--?

ALREADY ON MY WAY, BILL. SPEAK WITH YOU LATER.

"HE'S COMING. PREPARE YOURSELF."

INTERESTING -- THIS IS A *DIFFERENT* MACHINE. WHOEVER *FINANCED* THIS HAS GOT TO BE *WEALTHY.*

QURAC CERTAINLY HAS THE MONEY, BUT I *DOUBT* IF THEY'VE GOT THE TECHNOLOGY.

ON THE OTHER HAND, LEX LUTHOR HAS *BOTH.*

HE *COULD* BE INVOLVED... HE'S CERTAINLY USED HIS MONEY AND SCIENCE TO ATTACK ME BEFORE.

THOUGH I STILL DON'T QUITE UNDERSTAND *WHY.*

KATHONGG

THE THING'S TAKING OFF. WELL, NOT SO FAST, FRIEND.

WE'VE STILL GOT A *LOT* TO DISCUSS.

"MOVE IN... CLOSER. TAKE AIM."

"ATTACK!"

WHAT?!?

THEY MOVED IN *BEHIND* ME... THE OTHER MACHINES I FOUGHT BEFORE...

...AND STILL *OTHERS* BESIDES IT.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

"THIS WAY, MISS LANE..."

19

PRIVATE CONCORDE? OUR 'HOST' CERTAINLY DOESN'T SKIMP WITH HIS MONEY.

DOESN'T HE EVER PUT ANY AWAY FOR A RAINY DAY?

MR. LUTHOR WOULD USE HIS TECHNOL-OGY TO ALTER THE WEATHER, FIRST.

ABSOLUTELY DECADENT. IT COULD DO CALIGULA PROUD.

MISS LANE, PLEASE TO TAKE A SEAT.

I'D LOVE TO-- ON THE FIRST TAXI OUT OF HERE.

WHERE'S YOUR BOSS? I THOUGHT HE'D BE WAITING TO FAWN OVER ME AS USUAL.

I AM HERE, MY DEAR.

AND IF I FAWN, IT'S ONLY BECAUSE OF MY FEELINGS FOR YOU.

YOU'RE AWARE YOU'VE BLOWN IT THIS TIME. THE KIDNAPPING CHARGES ALONE WILL --

PLEASE, MY DEAR LOIS, HEAR ME OUT. I AM INDEED AT YOUR MERCY.

BUT I BELIEVE WHAT I HAVE TO SAY WILL CHANGE YOUR MIND ABOUT ME.

I APOLOGIZE FOR THE WAY I BROUGHT YOU HERE, BUT I KNEW YOU WOULD NOT LISTEN TO ME OTHERWISE. CHAMPAGNE?

NO. I ONLY DRINK WITH FRIENDS.

WHICH I SOON HOPE TO BE. THE POINT OF THIS MEETING, THEN:

THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE, I LEARNED OF YOUR MOTHER'S ACCIDENT. IT GRIEVED ME, BECAUSE THE COMPANY SHE WORKED FOR TURNS OUT TO BE A VERY MINOR SUBSIDIARY OF LEXCORP.

IN TRUTH, I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW I OWNED IT UNTIL THAT FACT WAS POINTED OUT.

GET TO THE BOTTOM LINE, LEX.

THE BOTTOM LINE: SINCE I ACCUMULATED MY FORTUNE, I RARELY FIND MYSELF ENTERING THE LABORATORY.

BECAUSE OF WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR MOTHER IN A COMPANY I OWN, I FELT *RESPONSIBLE* FOR THE CHEMICAL ACCIDENT WHICH IS *KILLING* HER.

AND SO, I RETURNED TO THE LABORATORY, FOR THE *FIRST* TIME IN MANY YEARS.

I BROUGHT MY *FINEST* SCIENTISTS WITH ME, AND, FOR THE PAST *TWO WEEKS*, LEXCHEM'S GREATEST MINDS CONCERNED THEMSELVES WITH YOUR MOTHER'S PROBLEM.

THE RESULTS ARE NOW IN. WE'VE DEVELOPED A *SERUM* WHICH CAN SAVE YOUR MOTHER'S LIFE.

IT IS *TERRIBLY EXPENSIVE*, BUT THAT DOESN'T MATTER-- NOT WITH A *LIFE* AT STAKE.

YOUR MOTHER WILL BE REQUIRED TO TAKE THE SERUM *EVERY MONTH*, BUT IT *DOES* WORK.

AND WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM *ME*, LEX, TO SAVE HER LIFE? YOU WANT TO *MARRY* ME--

--OR DO YOU JUST WANT ME TO *SERVE* YOU FOR THE REST OF *MY* LIFE?

WHAT *PAYMENT* ARE YOU GOING TO EXTRACT FOR THIS?

PAYMENT? I WANT *NOTHING* FROM YOU. I ONLY WANT YOU TO KNOW MY FEELINGS FOR YOU ARE *REAL*.

AND I WANT YOU TO KNOW HOW MUCH I *CARE*.

I'VE ALWAYS ADMITTED WHAT I AM, LOIS. I PLAY THE GAME OF BUSINESS TO *WIN*. BUT I'M *NOT* A CRUEL MAN, NOR THE *WICKED* ONE YOU'VE ALWAYS ACCUSED ME OF BEING.

LET US HAVE *DINNER*. PERHAPS YOU'LL FINALLY SEE THE *OTHER* SIDE OF LEX LUTHOR. DINNER THEN?

I...

...ALL RIGHT... *ALL RIGHT*. DINNER THEN.

21

IT DOESN'T MATTER NOW IF LUTHOR'S BEHIND THIS THING, OR IF IT WAS BUILT IN QURAC, OR EVEN ON MARS.

IT'S *KILLED* BEFORE, AND IT CERTAINLY PLANS TO KILL AGAIN. BUT I GET THE DISTINCT FEELING THIS TIME ITS TARGET IS *ME!*

WELL, THIS MAY BE SUICIDE, BUT SOMEHOW I'VE GOT TO *STOP* THAT THING.

"INTERESTING...FIVE SEPARATE ROBOTS ALL FITTING TOGETHER. LIKE SOMETHING OUT OF A KID'S TOY.

"TROUBLE IS, THE *SUM* IS DEFINITELY GREATER THAN ITS PARTS.

"AND THE INDIVIDUAL PARTS WEREN'T EXACTLY CHOPPED LIVER."

HERE GOES NOTHING!

"FULL POWER SET. WEAPONS READY."

"I TRULY BELIEVE, DESPITE HER QUALMS, SHE *ENJOYED* HER DINNER."

METRO

STALLONE IS COBRA ALSO ANNA AND THE SISTERS

TAXI

22

WHY DIDN'T YOU *RETURN* WITH HER?

WHY? I ALREADY *KNOW.* TO FURTHER INGRATIATE MYSELF MIGHT *JEOPARDIZE* MY VICTORY.

MISS LANE NEEDS TIME *ALONE* TO ACCEPT HER DEFEAT.

SHE *KNOWS* SHE LOST?

OF COURSE SHE DOES, MY DEAR LILYA. SHE'S SEEN HOW NOBLE AND GENTLEMANLY I'VE BEEN, AND HOW THAT *CONTRADICTS* HER IMAGE OF ME. AND SHE IS RIGHTFULLY *CONFUSED*. BUT SHE KNOWS.

YOU SEE, HER MOTHER MUST COME TO ME EACH MONTH FOR *FRESH SERUM* TO SAVE HER LIFE. EVERY MONTH, LOIS LANE WILL BE FORCED TO REALIZE HOW MUCH SHE *OWES* ME. HENCE MY VICTORY.

SHE'LL *RESENT* YOU, WON'T SHE?

OF COURSE, BUT SHE'S *INDEBTED* TO ME. AND I CAN *USE* THAT, AND SLOWLY *TURN* THAT INTO WHAT I WANT.

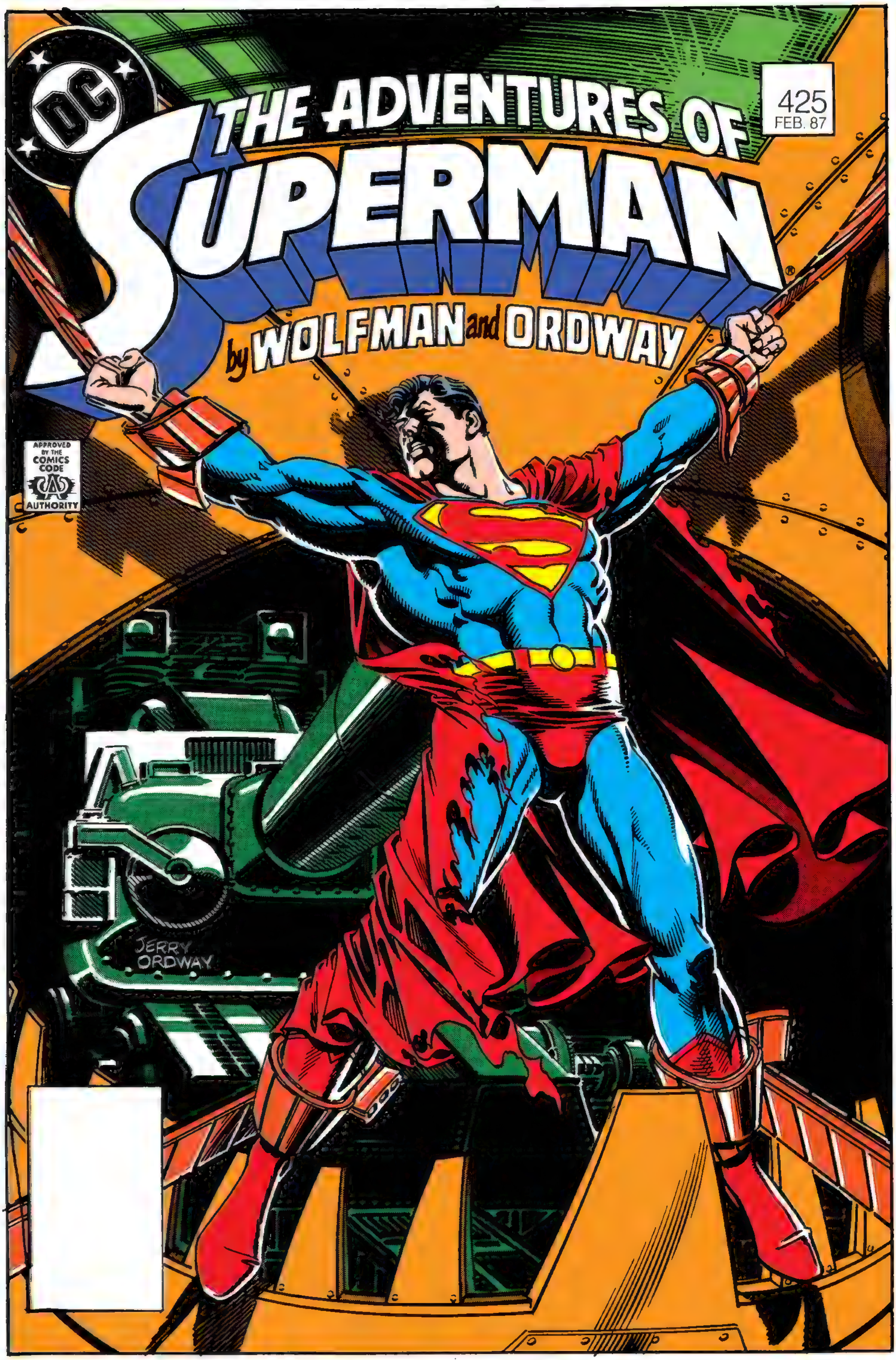
WHICH IS HER *LOVE*. AND, IN A WAY, I'VE ALREADY BEGUN THE CONVERSION PROCESS.

SHE *ACCEPTED* MY SERUM WITHOUT ONCE QUESTIONING JUST HOW I HAPPENED ON THIS MIRACLE SO QUICKLY.

SHE NEVER EVEN SUSPECTED I *CAUSED* HER MOTHER'S ACCIDENT IN THE FIRST PLACE... OR THAT I *COULD* HAVE CREATED A *SINGLE-USE* SERUM INSTEAD.

MONTH IN AND MONTH OUT, LOIS LANE WILL BE FORCED TO GRATEFULLY ACCEPT MY *HELPING HAND.*

AND *THAT* IS WHY I'VE ALREADY WON.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THE ADVENTURES OF
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APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
JERRY ORDWAY

THE ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN®

Created by JERRY SIEGEL & JOE SHUSTER

PLEASE LISTEN TO ME... IT'S SO *IMPORTANT* THAT AT LEAST *YOU* UNDERSTAND. NOBODY ELSE DOES.

I SIMPLY WANTED PEOPLE TO *KNOW* WHAT I DID... KNOW WHAT THE GOVERNMENT TRIED TO KEEP *SECRET*.

I WAS ACTUALLY ABLE TO CONSTRUCT A MACHINE WHICH COULD IMPRISON *SUPERMAN*. DO YOU REALIZE THE *IMPORTANCE* OF THAT?

PLEASE HEAR ME OUT. PLEASE LISTEN TO ME. PLEASE UNDERSTAND.

I AM PROFESSOR EMIL HAMILTON. IF AT LEAST *ONE* PERSON REMEMBERS THAT NAME, MY WORK...

...WON'T HAVE BEEN IN VAIN.

WHEN THE GOVERNMENT *BLACKBALLED* ME, I WAS BROKE. THEN I RECEIVED AN OFFER -- ALMOST OUT OF NOWHERE. FOR *GOOD* MONEY.

AT LEAST, I *THOUGHT* IT WAS.

GOING THE GAUNTLET

Marv Wolfman — WRITER
Jerry Ordway — ARTIST
John Costanza — LETTERER
Tom Ziuko — COLORIST
Andy Helfer — EDITOR

LEX LUTHOR, I'VE WANTED TO WORK ALONGSIDE YOU FOR *YEARS*. YOUR DISCOVERIES IN THE MID-SEVENTIES WERE *ASTOUNDING*.

WHY, THANK YOU, PROFESSOR. THOSE DAYS ARE *BEHIND* ME NOW. I NO LONGER TOIL IN THE LABORATORY... I HAVE *OTHERS* WHO DO MY RESEARCH FOR ME.

ALTHOUGH, TRUTH TO TELL, ON OCCASION I FEEL THE *URGE* TO DABBLE.

BOURBON, PROFESSOR?

NO THANK YOU, MR. LUTHOR... I DON'T DRINK.

YOU SHOULD...EVERYTHING IN *MODERATION*, YOU KNOW.

DRINK, WORK, WOMEN. ALL GOOD FOR THE *SOUL*.

NOW, THEN, THE *PURPOSE* OF YOUR VISIT HERE.

I KNOW OF YOUR MAGNETIC FIELD GENERATOR, PROFESSOR. YOU DEVELOPED IT WHILE WORKING AT *HITEK*, INC., DIDN'T YOU?

YES, WHAT OF IT?

I OWN *HITEK*, PROFESSOR. YOU WORKED ON YOUR INVENTION ON *MY* TIME, WITH *MY* COMPUTERS.

THEREFORE, BY THE CONTRACT YOU SIGNED WHEN YOU JOINED *HITEK*, I OWN YOUR WORK. *ALL* YOUR WORK.

NO! IT'S *MINE*!

THERE IS NO ROOM FOR ARGUMENT HERE, PROFESSOR HAMILTON.

I SIMPLY OWN YOUR GENERATOR, AND I EXPECT TO SEE ITS BLUEPRINTS IN MY OFFICE BY, OH, SHALL WE SAY *NINE O'CLOCK* TONIGHT?

FAIL TO DO SO AND I'LL *SUE* YOUR TAIL OFF.

NO! NEVER! I PUT TWENTY YEARS OF MY *LIFE* IN THOSE DESIGNS!

TWENTY YEARS OF YOUR LIFE AND THREE WEEKS OF MY COMPUTERS' TIME. BUT THE LAW IS THE LAW, PROFESSOR.

2

I'M NOT A *HEARTLESS* MAN, PROFESSOR. I WAS ONCE A SCIENTIST, THOUGH NOT A *FOOLISH* ONE LIKE YOU.

LEXCORP HAS ALWAYS *INTENDED* TO *PAY* FOR YOUR TIME, DESPITE OUR LEGAL OWNERSHIP. LET'S SEE... THREE WEEKS ON THE COMPUTER...

...SIX DAYS A WEEK, TEN HOURS A DAY. AT THE EXORBITANT RATE OF FIFTY DOLLARS AN HOUR--MINUS DEDUCTIONS, OF COURSE.

$7,600. MORE THAN GENEROUS, CONSIDERING WE ACTUALLY OWE YOU NOTHING.

GOOD DAY, PROFESSOR.

MR. LUTHOR SAID "GOOD DAY," PROFESSOR.

LET'S GO.

YOU CAN'T DO THIS TO ME, LUTHOR! IT'S *MY* INVENTION! YOU CAN'T *STEAL* IT FROM ME LIKE THIS!

I WAS *WRONG*, OF COURSE. HE COULD, AND DID. YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED NEXT, DON'T YOU?

"I RETURNED HOME, TO THAT *HOVEL* IN THE SLIME-PIT THEY CALL SUICIDE SLUM."

LUTHOR WON'T GET MY INVENTION! I'D *DESTROY* IT LONG BEFORE I'D LET HIM TAKE IT FROM ME!

IT'S *MINE!* FIRST THE GOVERNMENT TELLS ME THE MAGNETIC IMPULSES I USE ARE *UNSAFE!* THEY REFUSE TO EVEN *TEST* IT AS A DEFENSE WEAPON...

...THEN THEY *DENY* ME A PATENT! IT WORKS, DAMMIT-- I'VE TESTED IT! *NOTHING* CAN PENETRATE ITS SHIELD!

AND NOW LEX LUTHOR. I THOUGHT HE WAS *DIFFERENT!* I BELIEVED HE *STOOD* FOR SCIENCE, THAT HE WOULD UNDERSTAND!

ACME

HOW CAN I HAVE BEEN SUCH A *FOOL?*

KRAAK

SKRAK

WH-WHAT IS IT?! *WHO* ARE YOU?!

YOUR *CONSCIENCE*, OLD MAN!

YOU GOT SOMETHIN' THAT DON'T BELONG TO YOU!

GIVE IT BACK, OLD-TIMER. YOUR HEART AIN'T STRONG ENOUGH TO TAKE ALL THIS!

GIVE BACK WHAT AIN'T YOURS IN THE FIRST PLACE!

3

YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO NOW, DON'T YOU, PROFESSOR?

YOUR MACHINE BELONGS TO SOMEONE ELSE.

AND UNLESS YOU WANT US TO *RETURN* HERE--

--YOU'LL GIVE IT BACK TO ITS RIGHTFUL *OWNER*.

TH-THEY NEVER SAID THEY WORKED FOR LUTHOR, BUT WHO ELSE COULD IT BE?

BUT HOW COULD I *PROVE* IT? NOBODY BELIEVED ME.

NO CAN DO, PROFESSOR. IT'S *YOUR* WORD AGAINST MR. LUTHOR'S.

AND HE'S ONE OF OUR MOST *RESPECTED* CITIZENS.

BUT, LOOK AT ME! YOU *MUST* DO SOMETH--

METRO POLICE

AWRIGHT, AWRIGHT. LISTEN, DOC-- IF YOU CAN FIND *PROOF* HE WAS BEHIND THE ATTACK, WE'LL BRING HIM IN FOR QUESTIONING.

UNTIL THEN, I SUGGEST YOU FIND YOURSELF A STRONGER *DOOR LOCK*.

METRO POLICE

I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO! I WAS AFRAID LUTHOR WOULD HAVE ME *KILLED!* I NEEDED HELP!

"*THEY HAD TURNED ME DOWN ONCE BEFORE, BUT I WAS CLUTCHING AT STRAWS NOW. SURELY YOU KNOW THAT FEELING.*"

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

METROPOLIS DIRE
JOHN G ZIER

I'M SORRY, BUT OUR PREVIOUS DECISION STILL STANDS-- YOUR INVENTION IS CONSIDERED TOO DANGEROUS TO USE. DISMANTLE IT, PROFESSOR. FORGET IT EVER EXISTED AND TRY INVENTING SOMETHING LESS TROUBLESOME--

--SOMETHING LIKE A *CLEAN* NUCLEAR DEVICE.

4

"HAVE YOU EVER BEEN WITHOUT MONEY? WITHOUT HOPE? I WAS AT THAT POINT. I KNEW THE VALIDITY OF MY INVENTION, BUT I SEEMED TO BE THE ONLY ONE. THEN I RECEIVED A VISIT..."

PROFESSOR HAMILTON?

ARE YOU FROM LUTHOR? THERE'S NOTHING LEFT TO DESTROY.

NO, PROFESSOR, I'M HENRY WYATT FROM COMPUCON SERVICES. WE'VE HEARD OF YOUR WORK.

AND WE'VE FOLLOWED YOUR CAREER WITH KEEN INTEREST.

A CHANCE TO *JOIN* YOU IN WHAT WE BELIEVE WILL BE A SUCCESSFUL VENTURE.

AND WHAT DO YOU WANT?

IF YOUR DEVICE DOES AS WE'VE HEARD THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE, WE WANT *IN* ON THE FINANCING.

WE'RE WILLING TO TAKE AN *EVEN* SPLIT, BECAUSE WE BELIEVE YOUR INVENTION MAY BE WORTH *BILLIONS* WHEN PERFECTED.

EVEN?

IF IT WORKS, YOU WILL RECEIVE A *CONTRACT* THAT YOU CAN SHOW TO YOUR LAWYER.

LEXC

YOUR GENIUS WILL MAKE YOU WEALTHY, AND WE WISH TO GO ALONG FOR THE RIDE.

WITH THE PROPER FINANCING, IT TOOK ONLY A MATTER OF *DAYS* TO COMPLETE MY WORK.

WE ARE WAITING, PROFESSOR.

AND MY PROTOTYPE IS *COMPLETE*, MR. WILKERSON.

THE PERFECT *DEFENSE SYSTEM* IS NO LONGER A DREAM.

WITNESS *REALITY*.

THE COMPLETE MASTERING OF *MAGNETIC WAVES*.

5

WHAT ARE YOU *DOING*, HAMILTON?!!

GIVING YOU THE *PROOF* YOU WERE LOOKING FOR; THAT YOU MADE A *WISE* INVESTMENT.

I'VE FORMED A *MAGNETIC CAGE* AROUND YOU. ONE THOUSAND COMPUTER-CONTROLLED DEVICES SUCH AS THIS COULD JUST AS EASILY SURROUND OUR COUNTRY WITH A COMPLETE WEB-LINK SYSTEM.

IMAGINE, IF YOU WILL, AN ATTACK ON OUR SHORES. THE PRESIDENT'S *STAR WARS* PROGRAM MIGHT DEFLECT 60% OF THE INCOMING MISSILES ... AT VERY BEST, THAT IS.

90% CAN STILL LEVEL OUR COUNTRY. NOW OBSERVE.

BLAM

BLAM BLAM

ARE YOU CRAZY, MAN? WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

DEMONSTRATING.

THE BULLETS I FIRED WERE SIMPLY *VAPORIZED* ON CONTACT WITH MY MAGNETIC SHIELD.

LEXCORP

SNIK

SNIK

BUILT TO *SCALE*, MY DEVICE COULD DO THE SAME WITH *MISSILES*, WITH OR WITHOUT NUCLEAR WARHEADS.

THE SAME WITH *FIRE*, *ELECTRICAL*, OR EVEN *BACTERIAL* ATTACK.

NOW, THEN, WATCH AS I--

SKRAKKLEKKLEEK

SOMETHING IS *WRONG!*

6

WHAT IS IT?

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE, HAMILTON?

SNIK

SKRAAAAAM

MOTHER OF MERCY...

HE'S DEAD--

--AND YOU KILLED HIM!

HAMILTON--YOU KILLED HIM!

NO...

IT WORKS, I KNOW IT DOES! I'VE TESTED IT A *DOZEN* TIMES BEFORE! EVEN THE EARLIEST *PROTOTYPES* WORKED!

I'M TELLING YOU, THIS ISN'T MY FAULT!

IT ISN'T? SO CHARLES WILKERSON IS DEAD SIMPLY BY SOME LOUSY *FLUKE*? NO, I DON'T BUY THAT, HAMILTON.

I THINK YOU *TOOK* OUR MONEY AND *SQUANDERED* IT. I DON'T THINK YOU *EVER* USED IT TO PERFECT YOUR PROTOTYPE!

I THINK YOU'RE A *THIEF!* AND NOW YOU'RE A *KILLER!*

NO... I DIDN'T DO THIS! IT'S NOT MY FAULT! SOMETHING WENT WRONG! I'M GOING TO *PROVE* IT, THEN I'M COMING BACK AND I'LL *SHOW* YOU!

HAMILTON, DON'T BE A FOOL! DON'T TRY TO RUN! THE *POLICE* WILL FIND YOU! *HAMILTON?!?*

7

BUT I DID RUN. I WAS SO AFRAID THEY'D TAKE MY INVENTION FROM ME THAT I COULDN'T STAY THERE. SO I RAN. OH, LORD, ALL I EVER WANTED WAS FOR PEOPLE TO *KNOW* WHAT I HAD BUILT.

YOU *KNOW* WHAT HAPPENED NEXT, DON'T YOU? THERE WERE THOSE *TERRORIST ATTACKS* THROUGHOUT THE CITY.

SOME MANNER OF *MECHANICAL MONSTERS* SET LOOSE ON A *KILLING SPREE.* TERRORISTS, THE TELEVISION SAID. TERRORISTS CONDEMNING AMERICA.

THEN SUPERMAN APPEARED. HE WAS GOING TO TRY TO *STOP* THEM.

"BUT I KNEW HE COULDN'T. I KNEW HE NEEDED HELP.

"HE NEEDED HELP EVEN AS I NEEDED TO *PROVE* THE VALIDITY OF MY CLAIMS. HERE WAS MY CHANCE."

THE FREEDOM LEAGUE HAS BROUGHT THE BATTLE TO AMERICA'S SHORES. NO LONGER WILL THIS COUNTRY BE FREE FROM THE VIOLENCE OF ITS OWN DEEDS.

AMERICA'S GREATEST HERO WILL FALL. THEN THE COUNTRY ITSELF WILL FOLLOW.

METR

MARBLES
CIGARETTES

TAXI

8

THERE'S NO USE TRYING TO *DODGE* THOSE BLASTS, AND THERE'S NO USE TRYING TO *DELAY* GETTING MY HANDS DIRTY.

THE LONGER I HOLD BACK, THE MORE PRIVATE PROPERTY IS DESTROYED.

AND NOTHING IS ACCOMPLISHED, EXCEPT LETTING THAT THING GET ITS WAY, ONE BLOCK AT A TIME.

WHICH MEANS I'D JUST AS SOON TRY TO GET THIS OVER WITH AS FAST AS POSSIBLE.

IF I CAN KEEP THEM FROM SCORING A DIRECT HIT--

--WHOEVER "*THEM*" MIGHT BE.

METAL BANDS AGAIN... THEY WON'T PROVE ANY MORE EFFECTIVE AGAINST ME THIS TIME THAN THEY DID THE--

--LAST--

AGHHHHHH

ELECTRICITY... SO MUCH, IT *BURNS!* ALL RIGHT, LET IT WASH OVER ME... PUT IT OUT OF MY MIND.

OKAY, OKAY... THE *SHOCK* TOOK A SECOND TO WEAR OFF. I'M *BETTER* NOW. WON'T LET THAT HAPPEN A *SECOND* TIME.

NEXT STEP IS TO PULL *FREE*... BUT THESE BANDS ARE NEARLY UNBREAKABLE, EVEN WITH MY STRENGTH.

IT'S NOT GOING TO BE EASY.

BUT THEN, IT'S NOT IMPOSSIBLE, EITHER.

PIT

ITS SURFACE IS ELECTRIFIED... SO IT'S BEST NOT TO TEMPT FATE BY *TOUCHING* IT MORE THAN I HAVE TO.

JUST WHAT I NEED.

GUYS, DO YOU MIND IF I TAKE THAT BEAM?

TAKE ANYTHING YOU WANT, SUPERMAN.

I'LL FIND A WAY TO *THANK* THEM LATER.

I CAN GO FOR THE HEAD, BUT MY SUPER-HEARING INDICATES THERE ARE *PEOPLE* INSIDE.

I DON'T WANT TO *HURT* THEM IF I CAN AVOID IT, EVEN IF *THEY* MEAN TO KILL *ME*.

WHICH MEANS IT'S SIMPLY BEST TO GET RID OF THEIR *WEAPONRY*.

IT SHOULDN'T BE LONG NOW... CAN'T WAIT TO FIND OUT *WHO* THEY'RE WORKING FOR. THE TERRORIST NATION OF QURAC? OR LEX LUTHOR? OR COULD IT BE SOMEONE ELSE ALTOGETHER?

SKWUHK!

ONCE I FIND OUT *WHO*, I'LL FIND OUT *WAY*. BUT NOTHING'S MORE IMPORTANT THAN *STOPPING* THEM, AND PREVENTING THEM FROM KILLING ANYONE ELSE!

10

FLLLLLLLLLLLZZZZ

THEY DON'T WANT TO BE STOPPED. NO SURPRISE THERE.

JUST AS THEY SHOULDN'T BE SURPRISED THAT I FULLY INTEND TO PUT THEM OUT OF COMMISSION.

STILL, I DON'T LIKE THIS, ANY OF IT... THEIR WEAPONRY IS INCREDIBLY ADVANCED.

MORE THAN ANY TERRORIST NATION'S. AND THE MODUS OPERANDI JUST ISN'T LUTHOR'S, NO MATTER HOW CRAZED HE MIGHT SOMETIMES BE.

SO I HAVE NO IDEA WHO-- *MISSILE!*

BETTER NOT LET IT HIT ME!

NO TELLING HOW POWERFUL THE EXPLOSIVES INSIDE MIGHT BE!

THEY MIGHT BE MORE THAN WILLING TO DESTROY HALF OF METROPOLIS TO GET AT ME!

STICKS ON MY TAIL LIKE *KRAZY GLUE*, AND IT'S BUILDING UP SPEED!

DON'T THINK I CAN *OUTRACE* IT *OUT* OF TOWN TO SOMEWHERE SAFE.

"YOU'RE STILL LISTENING TO ME, AREN'T YOU? IT'S IMPORTANT THAT YOU ARE. I WANTED TO HELP SUPERMAN.

"AND IN SO DOING, HELP MYSELF."

BURGER KING

ONE WAY

11

"IF I COULD HAVE SAVED SUPERMAN, I COULD HAVE PROVED TO THE GOVERNMENT THAT MY MACHINE WORKS.

"I KNEW I COULD DO IT. DON'T YOU SEE? I HAD NO INTENTION OF HURTING SUPERMAN! HE WAS GOING TO PROVE MY MACHINE FOR ME!"

ZON

ALL RIGHT... I FORCED MYSELF A FEW YARDS AHEAD... ENOUGH TO SAFELY *TURN.*

NOW, IF I CAN *KEEP* AHEAD, I SHOULD BE IN THE CLEAR.

EVERYBODY'S BEEN MOVED *AWAY* FROM THIS AREA...IT'S CLEAR FOR SEVERAL *BLOCKS.*

I HAVEN'T DETECTED ANY SIGNS OF *RADIATION*, SO I'M SURE THE BOMB'S NOT *NUCLEAR.*

I THINK MY PLAN MAY BE *SAFE.*

AT LEAST FOR THE CITY, AND FOR ME.

ALL RIGHT, TURN QUICKLY-- *NOW!!*

KHOOOOM!

IF *THAT* DOESN'T SHAKE UP THAT TIN CAN, *NOTHING* WILL.

12

OKAAAY! AS I THOUGHT, THE MISSILE *CRIPPLED* THE MECHANICAL MONSTER BUT LEFT THE PEOPLE INSIDE ALIVE.

NOW I CAN EASILY TAKE CARE OF THE *REST.*

IT SOMETIMES FEELS *SO GOOD* TO USE MY POWERS, TO KNOW THAT BECAUSE OF SOME TWIST OF FATE...

...I CAN *HELP* SO MANY PEOPLE.

PA WAS RIGHT--I *AM* HERE FOR A REASON. I CAN *NEVER* ALLOW MYSELF TO FORGET THAT.

"PLEASE UNDERSTAND, THAT ALL I WANTED TO DO WAS STOP THE FIGHTING...

TOW AWAY ZONE

"...TO STOP THE *DAMAGE.* I ACTIVATED THE MACHINE--

"--AND THE GRID EXPANDED TO ENCOMPASS SUPERMAN AND THE ROBOT."

HAMILTON? WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

CONTAINING YOUR FIGHT, SUPERMAN. LETTING THE WORLD *KNOW* WHAT I CAN DO. THIS IS FOR *EVERYONE'S BENEFIT.*

HE DIDN'T BELIEVE ME, BUT IT WAS. METROPOLIS WOULD BE *SAFE.* AND THE WORLD WOULD SEE HOW MY WORK COULD *SAVE* THEM FROM WAR.

I STILL BELIEVE THAT. YOU *DO* UNDERSTAND? THE WORLD HAD TO KNOW HOW *IMPORTANT* MY MACHINE WAS.

13

YOU'RE GETTING IN THE WAY, HAMILTON. LET US DOWN AND GET *OUT* OF HERE.

NO! THE WORLD HAS TO KNOW THE TRUTH!

THE HECK WITH IT, THEN. I'LL WORRY ABOUT HIM LATER.

AFTER I'VE GOTTEN TO THE BOTTOM OF *THIS*.

WHOOOOO... IT'S STILL FUNCTIONING, AND I WAS ABOUT TO BARGE IN WITHOUT THINKING.

NOT GOOD, CLARK.

FIRST, LET'S GET RID OF THIS PLASMA CANNON. THAT'S ONE LESS THING I HAVE TO *WORRY* ABOUT.

EH?

SKREEEEE

UHHHH... WASN'T PREPARED--

LORD, MY *BONES* FEEL LIKE THEY'VE BEEN SQUEEZED INTO A *VISE*.

CONCUSSION BLAST... IT'S INCREASING POWER.

HARD TO FIGHT BACK... ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO RESIST.

GREAT, JUST GREAT. HAMILTON'S ENERGY GRID IS *DRAINING* OFF MY STRENGTH AS WELL.

MA AND PA DIDN'T RAISE THEIR SON TO BE A SUPERMAN SANDWICH.

NEED SOME PROTECTION... THE *METAL HATCH*.

IF I CAN KEEP CONSCIOUS... FORCE MY HANDS DOWN...

... PICK UP THE HATCH--

SKWAANGG

ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT... I WASN'T TOP PITCHER IN THE SMALLVILLE LITTLE LEAGUE FOR NOTHING.

HMMM... JUST NOTICED SOMETHING.

14

THE FREEDOM LEAGUE'S STOPPED BROADCASTING THEIR THREATS. I HAVEN'T *HEARD* THEM SINCE THIS FIGHT BEGAN.

FEWER HEARTBEATS NOW THAN BEFORE.

AND I NEVER STOPPED TO THINK WHAT THEIR SOURCE OF POWER IS.

NOTHING MECHANICAL COULD KEEP UP AN ATTACK LIKE THAT FOR SO LONG. AHH, THERE THEY ARE.

PARTY'S OVER. AND I WANT SOME *ANSWERS*.

YOU'RE NOT GETTING THEM, SUPERMAN.

THE FREEDOM LEAGUE WILL NOT SURRENDER,

AND YOU WILL NOT TAKE US YOUR PRISONERS.

THE VESSEL IS POWERED BY *OUR ENERGIES*... IT FEEDS OFF OUR BRAINWAVES.

WE ARE *PART* OF THESE MACHINES...

... AND WE GIVE OURSELVES OVER TO THE CAUSE--

--*NOW!*

NO! DON'T-- MY GOD-- *DON'T!*

SCREEEEEEEEEEE

YOU CAN'T KILL YOURSELVES. PLEASE, LISTEN TO ME--DON'T KILL YOURSELVES.

MY GOD...

TH-THEY DON'T CARE...

...THEY JUST DON'T CARE.

15

EVERYTHING'S BLOWING TO BITS -- THEY'RE TAKING IT ALL WITH THEM, JUST TO MAKE SURE NO ONE COULD INVESTIGATE THE WRECKAGE.

WHAT SORT OF LEADER COULD GENERATE THAT SORT OF *FANATICISM*?

GOOD QUESTION. I STILL DON'T KNOW WHAT THE FREEDOM LEAGUE IS! STILL DON'T KNOW IF THEY CAME FROM QURAC, OR EVEN IF *LUTHOR'S* AT THE BOTTOM OF THIS!

ONLY THING I *DO* KNOW IS I'M *SICK*. WHAT A TERRIBLE WASTE OF LIFE.

YOU DID IT, SUPERMAN... *WE* DID IT TOGETHER!

MY FIELD GENERATOR *CONTAINED* THAT ENTIRE EXPLOSION! NOBODY WAS HARMED! THIS *PROVES* WHAT I'VE BEEN SAYING!

YOU SAVED US, SUPERMAN!

'BOUT TIME WE KICKED THOSE TERRORISTS' BUTTS!

SUPERMAN, YOU DID IT! *YOU DID IT!*

MADELINE WADE, *WMETV*. WHO *WERE* THEY, SUPERMAN?

WHY WERE THEY *ATTACKING* US?

WHAT DID YOU *DO* TO THEM?

SUPERMAN, OUR VIEWERS ARE WAITING TO *HEAR* FROM YOU.

I'M SORRY, MADELINE. I'M REALLY NOT UP FOR A *PRESS CONFERENCE* RIGHT NOW.

WHAT A FIGHT. WHAT A *HERO!*

WAIT! THAT WAS *MY* FORCE FIELD THEY FOUGHT IN! *I* SAVED THE CITY *UNTOLD DAMAGE!* LISTEN, MY NAME IS PRO--

YEAH, BUDDY, THANKS. C'MON, LET'S CATCH UP TO SUPERMAN. MAYBE HE'LL TALK. *C'MON!*

16

WAIT! YOU HAVE TO HEAR ME OUT! PLEASE, LISTEN TO ME! YOU HAVE TO KNOW WHAT I'VE DONE!

LISTEN TO ME!

THEY WOULDN'T EVEN LISTEN. I COULDN'T GET ANY-ONE TO BELIEVE ME.

THE GOVERNMENT IGNORED ME. LUTHOR TRIED TO *STEAL* MY MACHINE. COMPUCON ACCUSED ME OF MURDER. THEY ALL IGNORED ME.

I SWORE TO MYSELF... "NO MORE," I SWORE TO MYSELF. "NEVER AGAIN!"

ntino

"YOU'RE LISTENING TO ME, AREN'T YOU? I KNEW WHAT I HAD TO DO THEN... I KNEW HOW TO PROVE MY CASE!

"I WORKED DAY AND NIGHT THROUGH THE NEXT WEEK.

"ON SUNDAY MORNING, WITH FIFTH AVENUE STILL DARK AND EMPTY, I WAS READY TO SET EVERYTHING IN PLACE.

"AT LAST, WHEN DAWN BROKE, I WAS READY."

SUPERMAN, I KNOW YOU CAN HEAR ME...

...AND I WANT YOU TO MEET WITH ME, THIS MORNING, NOW. FIFTH AVENUE.

THE WORLD HAS IGNORED ME LONG ENOUGH, SUPERMAN, AND I NEED YOU TO PROVE HOW RIGHT I'VE BEEN. COME TO ME, SUPERMAN. THE LIFE OF AN INNOCENT HANGS IN THE BALANCE.

HAMILTON'S VOICE?

DON'T KNOW WHAT HE WANTS, BUT I'VE GOT NO CHOICE. NOT IF THERE'S A LIFE AT STAKE.

17

NO COMMERCIAL TRAFFIC

STAND WHERE YOU ARE, SUPERMAN, AND *LISTEN* TO ME.

LET THE WOMAN GO, HAMILTON. WE CAN TALK.

DOES *EVERYONE* THINK I'M A FOOL, SUPERMAN? LISTEN TO ME--I'VE GOT NOTHING TO LOSE ANYMORE.

THE *GOVERNMENT* WON'T LISTEN TO ME. *LUTHOR* IS FILING MOTIONS IN COURT TO *STEAL* MY MACHINE.

EVERYONE HAS *IGNORED* ME.

BUT NOT ANYMORE, SUPERMAN.

I PICKED THIS STRUMPET OFF THE STREETS. NOBODY WILL MISS HER IF SHE DIES.

I WILL, HAMILTON. IT DOESN'T MATTER *WHO* SHE IS OR *WHAT* SHE'S DONE. I'LL DO WHAT I HAVE TO DO TO SAVE HER.

JUST WHAT I EXPECTED YOU TO SAY, SUPERMAN.

KLIK

THERE. NOW NO ONE CAN ENTER OR LEAVE. IT'S JUST YOU AGAINST MY *CREATIONS*.

I'VE SET UP RELAY STATIONS ALONG FIFTH AVENUE. YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO FLY, SUPERMAN... BUT YOU CAN *WALK* TO ME.

YOU CAN WALK MY *GAUNTLET*.

IF YOU DIE, SHE WILL LIVE. AND WITH YOUR DEATH YOU WILL PROVE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MY MACHINE TO THE WORLD. ARE YOU READY?

BOUTIQUE Carrie's

I'VE ALREADY STARTED.

IT WON'T BE EASY. THE PATHWAY IS MINED WITH WEAPONS, SUPERMAN.

LET US SEE HOW SUCCESSFUL YOU ARE IN NAVIGATING THROUGH!

IT'S NOT OVER YET, SUPER-MAN.

WOMP!

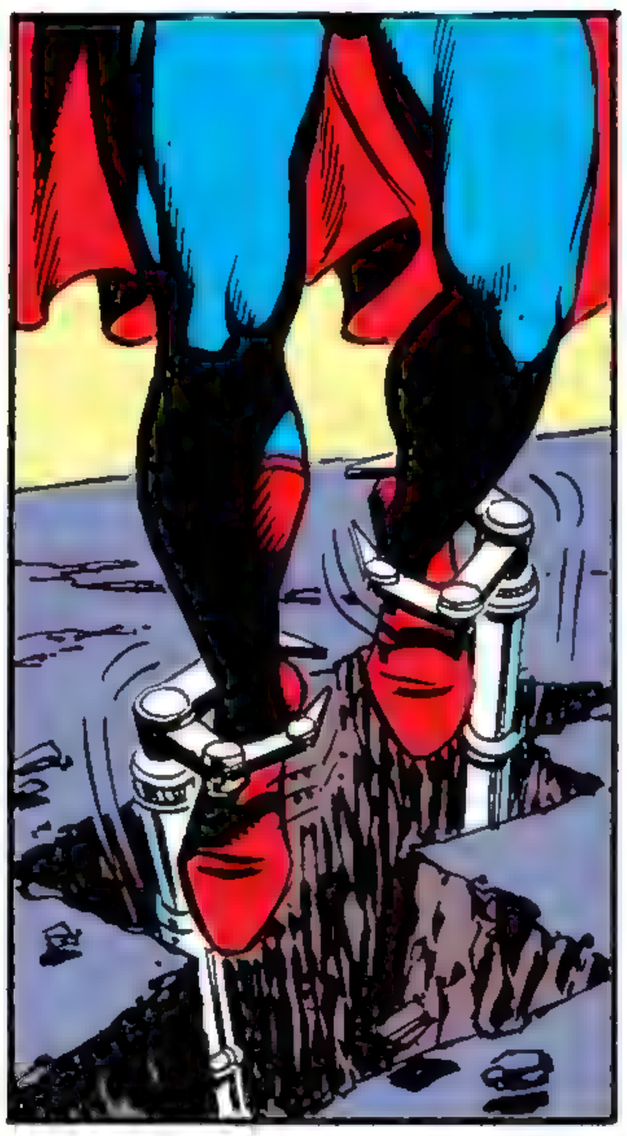
STOP THIS MADNESS, HAMILTON. LET HER GO.

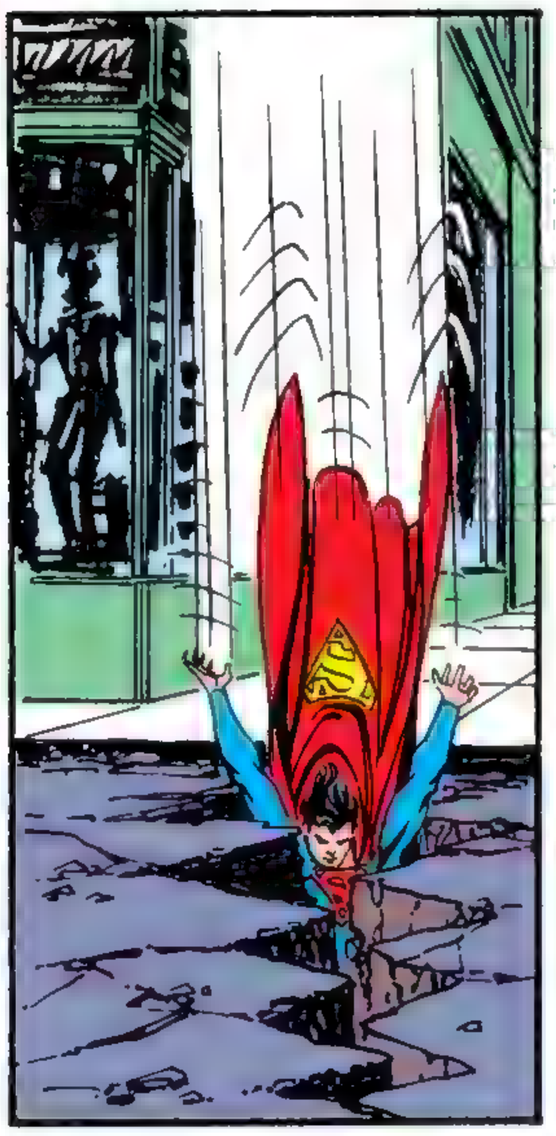
YOUR *HEAT VISION* CAN'T PENETRATE MY MAGNETIC SHIELD, SUPERMAN. *NOTHING* CAN.

I WILL-- EH?

GROUND-- GIVING WAY--?

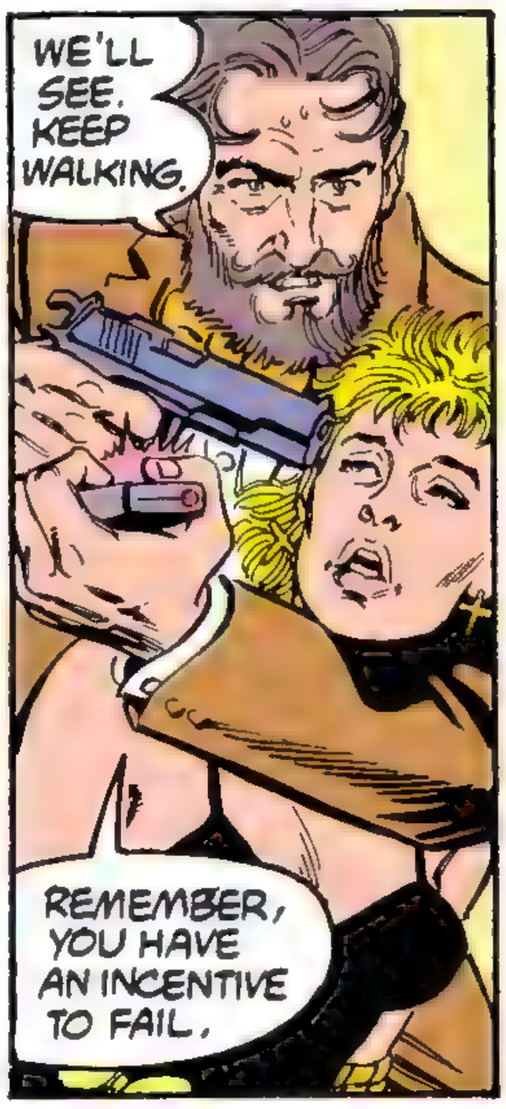
19

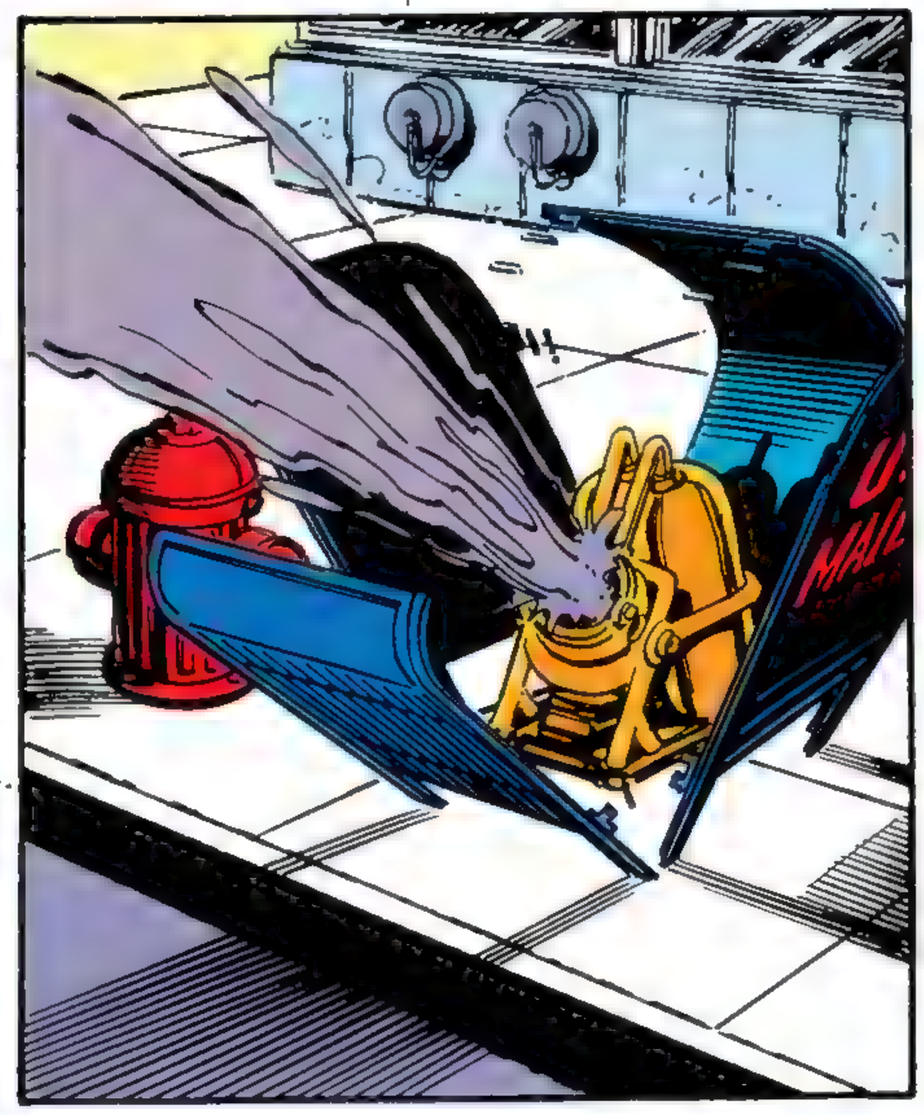




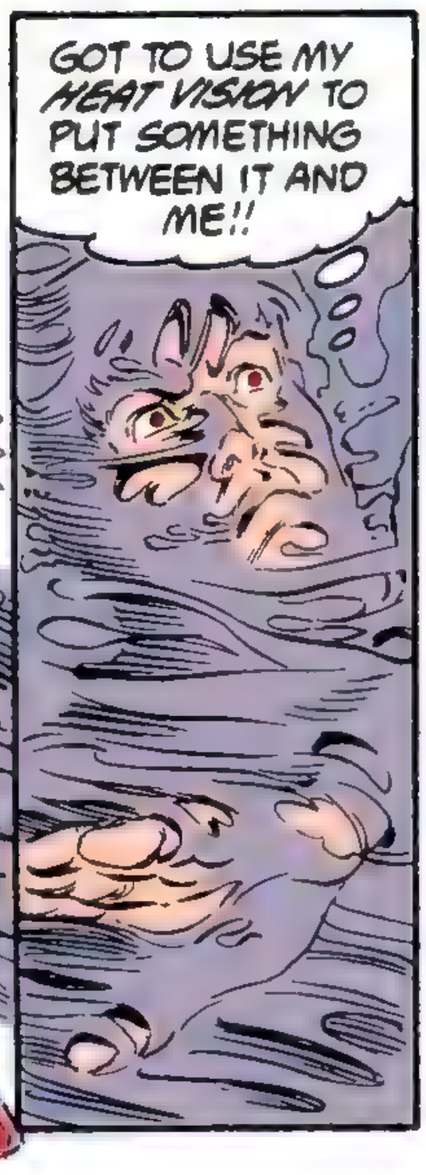
OPRAHS

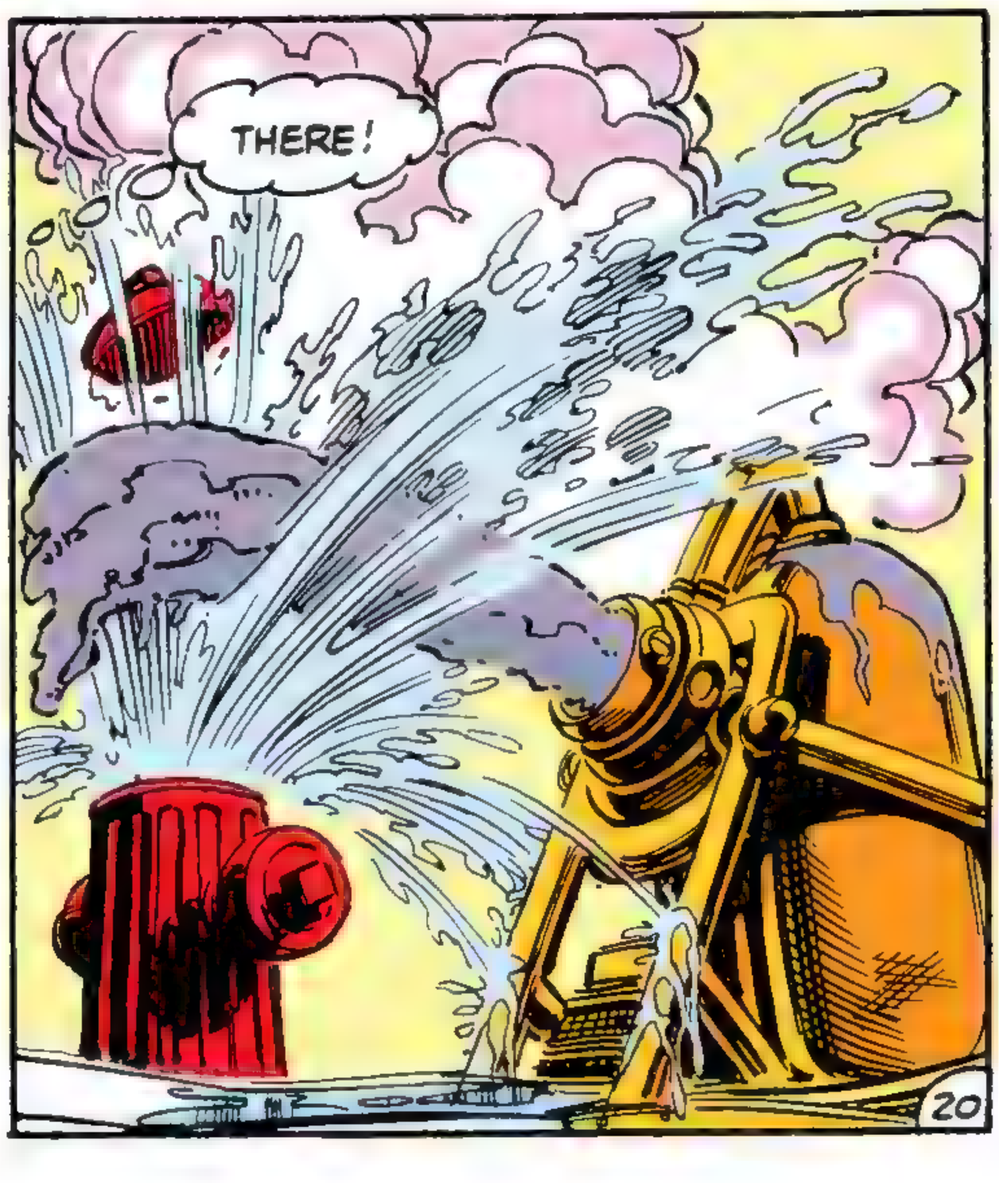
YOU CAN'T STOP ME, HAMILTON.

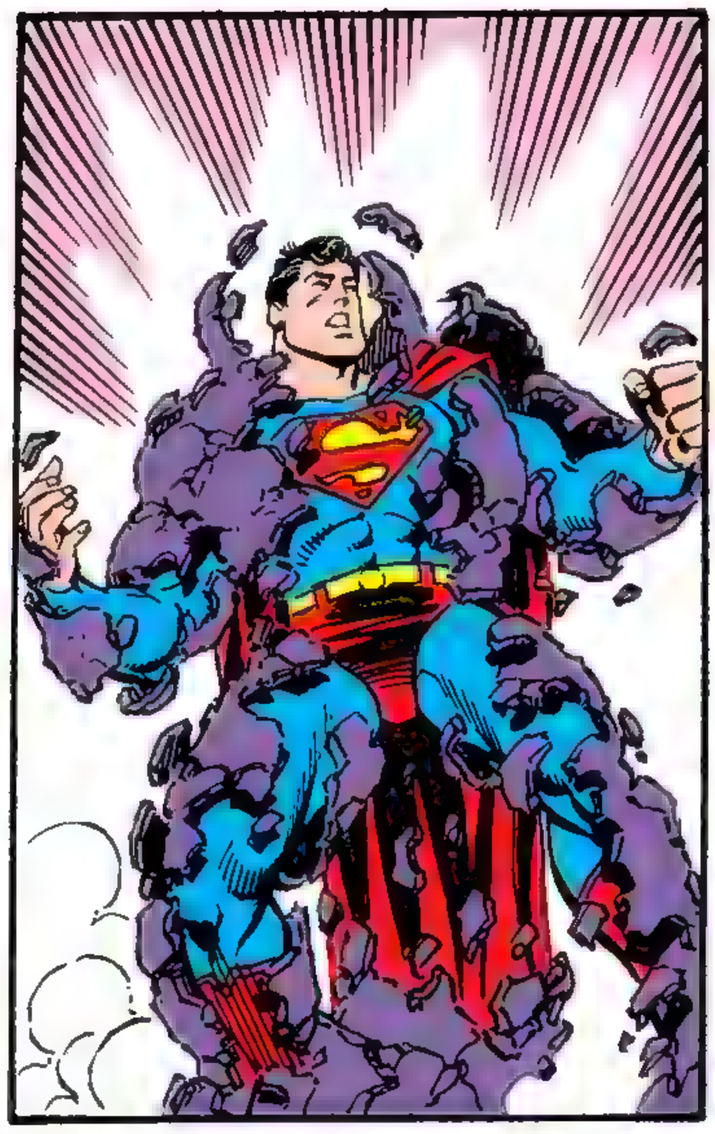

WE'LL SEE. KEEP WALKING.
REMEMBER, YOU HAVE AN INCENTIVE TO FAIL.

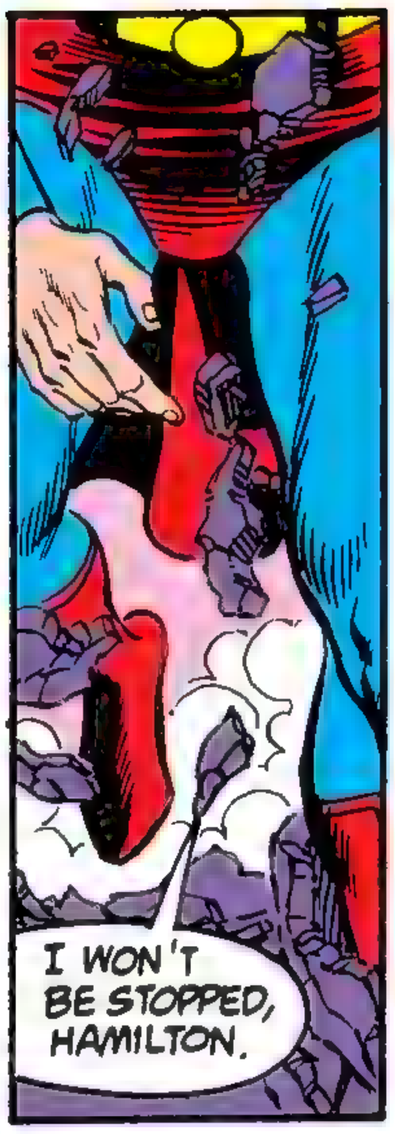


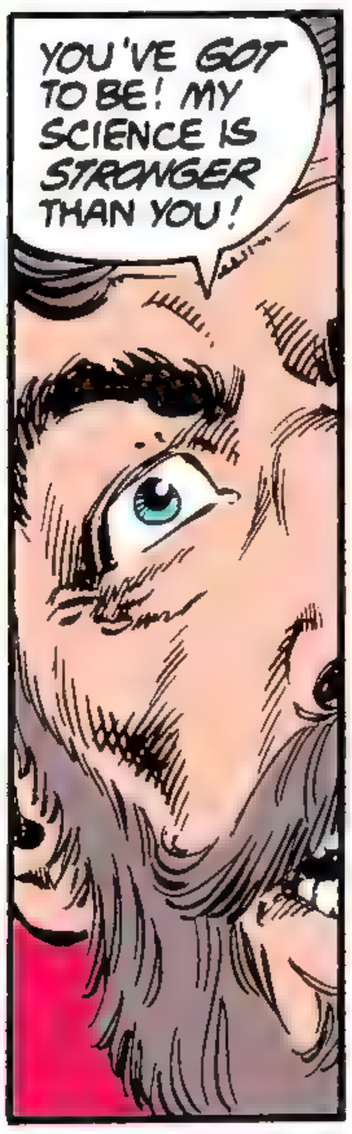
UGGH!
THIS GLOP IS SOLIDIFYING ON CONTACT WITH MY BODY!

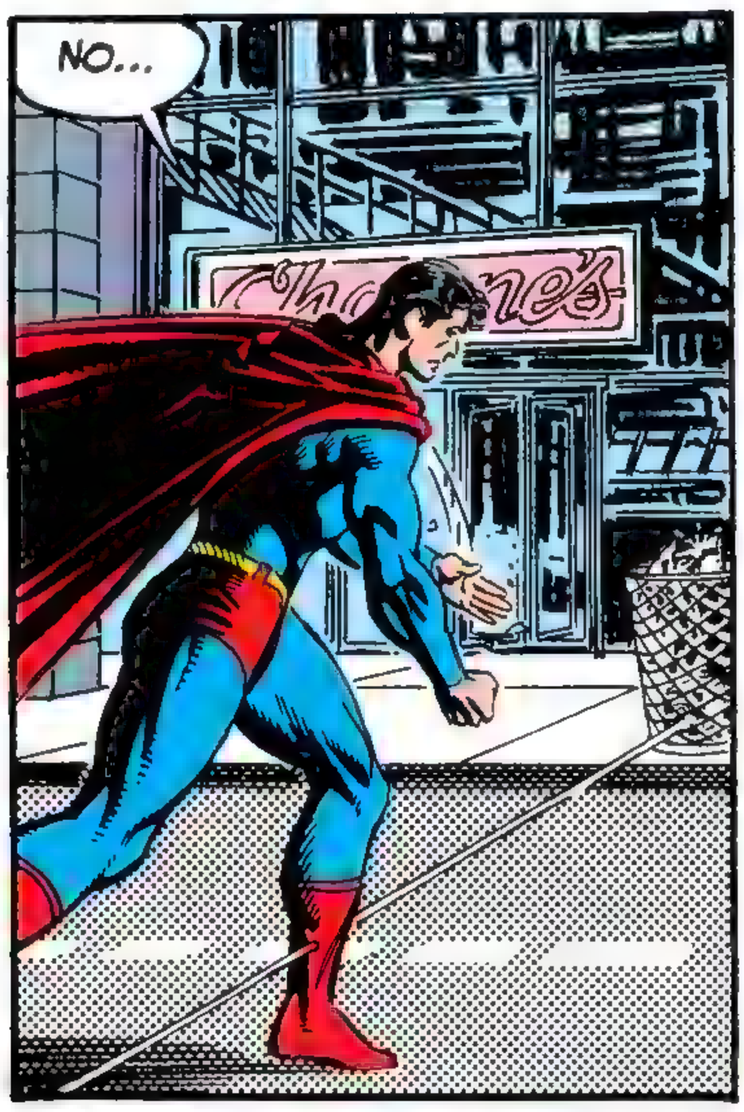

GOT TO USE MY HEAT VISION TO PUT SOMETHING BETWEEN IT AND ME!!

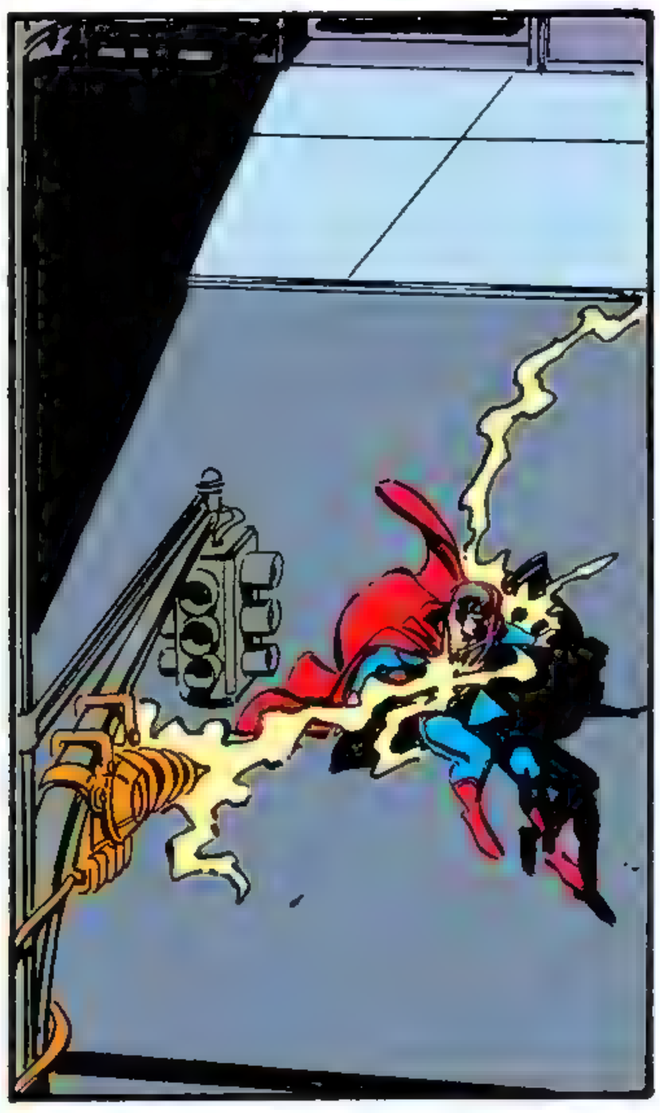

THERE!

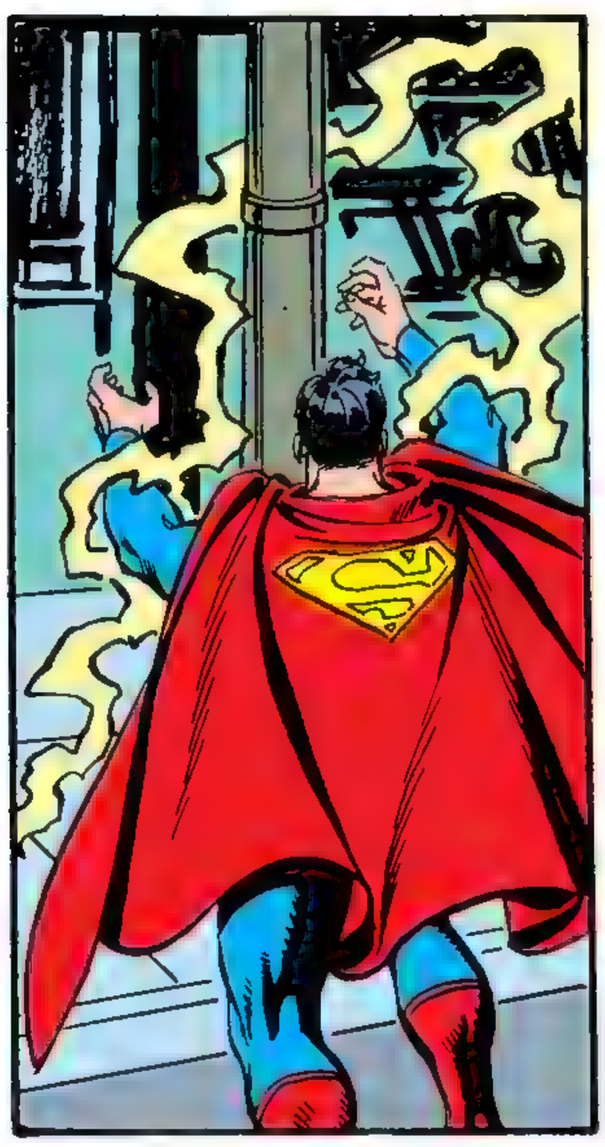


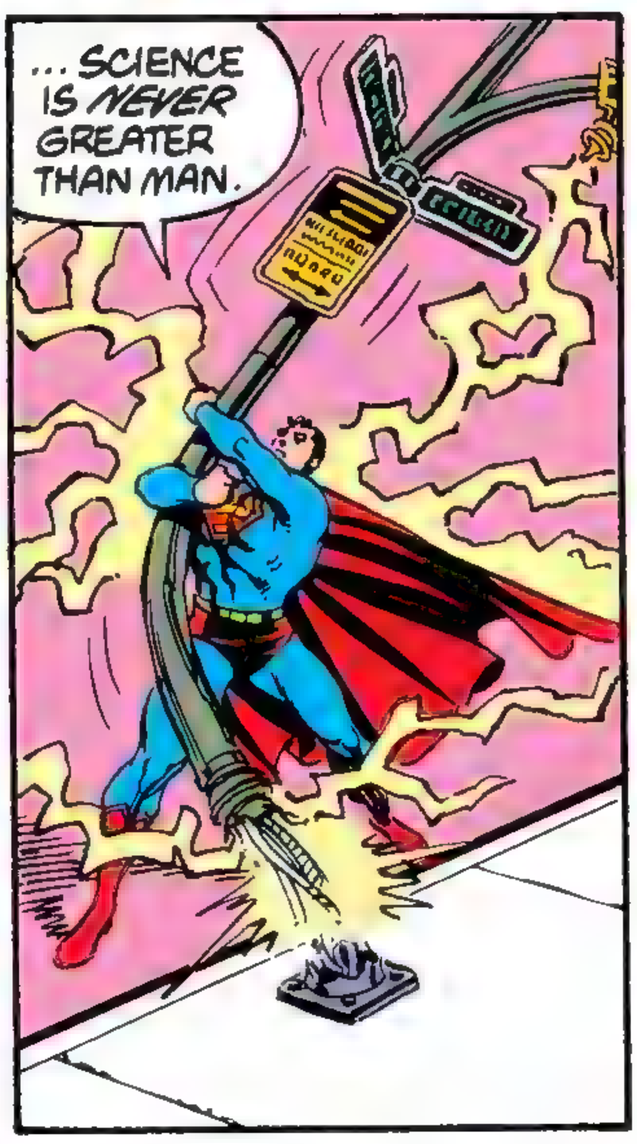

I WON'T BE STOPPED, HAMILTON.


YOU'VE GOT TO BE! MY SCIENCE IS STRONGER THAN YOU!


NO...






... SCIENCE IS NEVER GREATER THAN MAN.

HAMILTON, PLEASE GIVE UP.
WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO DO IS INSANE!

NO! I'VE BEEN STOPPED TOO OFTEN IN THE PAST! I WON'T LET THAT HAPPEN TO ME AGAIN!
21

PUT IT DOWN, HAMILTON. IT'S OVER. YOU CAN'T HURT ME AND YOU KNOW IT.

I KNOW, SUPERMAN, BUT I CAN'T *LIVE* WITH THIS, EITHER. NOBODY'S EVER LISTENED. NOBODY'S EVER *CARED.*

NOW I DON'T CARE ANYMORE. I'M *DESTROYING* MY MACHINE--AND TAKING THE THREE OF *US* WITH IT!

I WON'T LET THAT HAPPEN, HAMILTON-- EVEN TO *YOU.* YOU NEED *HELP.*

I'M *BEYOND* HELP, SUPERMAN. IT'S *OVER.*

"MR. LUTHOR. IT'S OVER."

THERE'S AN INNOCENT *WOMAN* HERE, HAMILTON. LET HER GO. WE CAN TALK THIS OUT.

NO!

"GOOD. FOR ONCE, I'M PLEASED WITH SUPERMAN'S *VICTORY.*"

SUPERMAN, *DO* SOMETHING!!

DONE.

"HAMILTON NEVER REALIZED COMPUCON SERVICES WAS YET ANOTHER SUBSIDIARY OF LEXCORP.

SKRABLAM

"WHICH REMINDS ME... MAKE CERTAIN CHARLES WILKERSON'S *WIDOW* RECEIVES A LARGE PENSION."

I-I TOLD YOU... I WOULDN'T... ALLOW YOU TO.. DESTROY YOURSELF.

"CHARLES HAD NO IDEA OF THE *SACRIFICE* HE HAD TO MAKE FOR SCIENCE."

N-NO MATTER THE COSSSST...

SUPERMAN? H-HE'S HURT. *SUPERMAN!?* YOU DID THIS TO SAVE *ME?* MY GOD!

DON'T MOVE, MAN! ONE TWITCH AND WE SHOOT!

IT'S OKAY, IT'S OKAY! I'LL GO. JUST HELP SUPERMAN, PLEASE.

I GAVE UP. IT WAS AS SIMPLE AS THAT. I TRIED TO TELL THE REPORTERS ABOUT MY MACHINE, BUT THEY DIDN'T CARE.

NOBODY EVER LISTENED.

BY NOW, LUTHOR PROBABLY HAS MY MACHINE..

NOW *HE'LL* TAKE THE CREDIT FOR MY GENIUS, WHILE I ROT HERE. IT'S NOT AT ALL FAIR. NOBODY WILL KNOW ABOUT ME. *NOBODY.*

GUARD. *GUARD!* ARE YOU LISTENING TO ME? *GUARD!!*

3.5 MILLION

METRO POLICE

YOU SAY SOMETHING, MAC?

SAY SOMETHING?

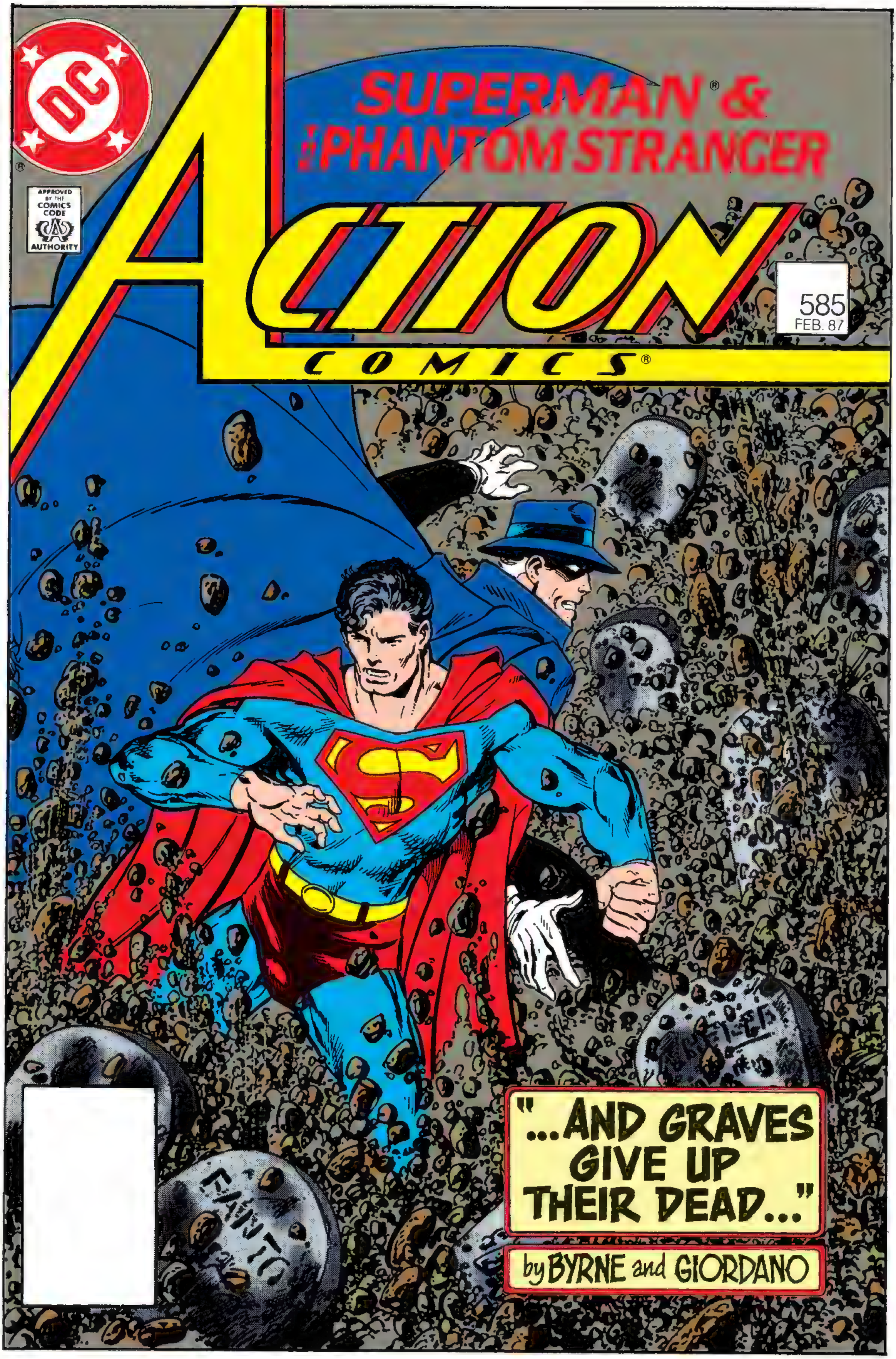
METRO

NO...

...I DIDN'T SAY A WORD.

NOTHING!

THE End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585
FEB. 87
"...AND GRAVES GIVE UP THEIR DEAD..."
by BYRNE and GIORDANO

AND GRAVES GIVE UP THEIR DEAD...

DOES THE SOIL *REMEMBER?*

CONSIDER THIS PLOT OF LAND, A FEW ACRES OF *UNHALLOWED* GROUND.

HERE LIE THE *ROTTED REMAINS* OF A HUNDRED EVIL MEN, THEIR LIVES *SNUFFED OUT* BY THE SOCIETY THEY *DEFIED.*

MURDERERS. KIDNAPPERS. RAPISTS. MEN WHOSE LIVES WERE A CATALOG OF *PAIN* AND *DEATH* FOR ALL WHO CROSSED THEIR BLOOD-STAINED PATHS.

DOES THE SOIL *REMEMBER?* DOES EVIL LEAVE ITS BLACK STAIN EVEN ON THE INNOCENT EARTH?

I *KNOW.* AND I WILL *TELL* YOU, IF YOU ARE *STOUT* ENOUGH OF *HEART* TO WALK A WHILE ALONG THE PATH *I* DAILY TREAD.

FOLLOW ME... FOR I AM...

THE PHANTOM STRANGER

GIORDANO

PIB

BYRNE

COSTANZA

HELFER

THE TALE BEGINS ONE HUNDRED MILES FROM THAT FORGOTTEN, NEGLECTED GRAVE-YARD.

IT BEGINS IN THE CITY OF *METROPOLIS*--LARGEST AND, SOME SAY, *GREATEST* CITY OF THE MORTAL WORLD.

A PROUD CITY OF CLOUD-PIERCING TOWERS. A CITY OF *INTERNATIONAL COMMERCE. CAPITAL CITY* OF THE *WORLD.*

"AND TODAY, A CITY *BESIEGED!*

"ABOVE THE GLEAMING SKYSCRAPERS, A NIMBUS OF *ARCANE ENERGIES* CRACKLES AND GROWS.

"AND AT THE VERY SEETHING HEART OF THAT MAELSTROM, A HERO FEELS THE COLD HAND OF *DEATH* CLOSE TIGHT ABOUT HIM."

YOU... CAN'T... WIN... *ARATHAZA.*

NO, MORTAL?

SUPERMAN YOU MAY BE, AND *POWERFUL* IN YOUR OWN SMALL WAY...

...BUT I AM POWER BEYOND ALL *KNOWING.*

I AM POWER *BEYOND* AND *BEYOND.*

MAYBE.) BUT FORTY-EIGHT HOURS AGO YOU WERE BARB KOWALESKI, SECRETARY.

YOUR POWER IS ALL EXTERNAL, ARATHAZA.

TACKED ON.

NOT LIKE YOURS, EH, SUPERMAN?

GREAT SUPERMAN! YOUR ALIEN CELLS DRAW POWER FROM THE YELLOW LIGHT OF THE SUN.

BUT I CAN DRAIN THAT POWER.

I CAN EMPTY YOU, AS IF POURING WATER FROM A VESSEL, SUPERMAN.

'AND AS YOUR POWER DIMS...

...SO DOES MINE INCREASE!

THAT'S THE KEY!

SHE'S DRAINING MY ENERGY, MY LIFE-FORCE. EVERY TIME I STRUGGLE AGAINST HER...

...SHE GROWS STRONGER.

WHICH LEAVES ME ONLY ONE CHANCE...

SUPERMAN!

OVER SO SOON, IS IT? A PITY.

FROM ALL I'D HEARD OF YOU, I'D HOPED YOU MIGHT BE MADE OF STRONGER STUFF.

3

I AM!!

AND IF YOU HAD MORE GOING FOR YOU THAN GLORIFIED CONJURING TRICKS...

...YOU'D KNOW THAT.

BUT NOW...

...IT'S ALL OVER!

SKKASH!

RRRRRR... GRUMMBLE!!

BOOOM

WHAT-WHAT...

HOW...

HOW DID YOU...??

I DID *NOTHING*, MS. KOWALESKI. YOU WERE DRAINING MY POWER TO CREATE YOUR MYSTIC MAELSTROM AND FLYING FORTRESS.

I GAMBLED THAT IF I BECAME COMPLETELY *PASSIVE*, THERE WOULDN'T BE ANY POWER *TO* DRAIN, AND YOUR *STAFF* WOULD *EXHAUST* ITSELF.

IF ONLY FOR A MOMENT.

WHEN I GRABBED YOUR STAFF AWAY FROM YOU I WAS USING NO MORE THAN NORMAL, *HUMAN STRENGTH*.

AND THAT WAS ENOUGH TO TAKE YOU *OFF-GUARD*, AND *DEFEAT* YOU.

A *VICTORY* FOR THE *MAN OF STEEL*. AN *EASY* VICTORY, YOU MAY SAY.

BUT CONSIDER THIS: BARBARA KOWALESKI IS NOT A TRULY *EVIL* WOMAN.

PETTY, YES. SPITEFUL AND MEAN, YES.

BUT NOT TRULY EVIL.

AND SO, ALTHOUGH THE WOMAN WHO CALLED HERSELF "*ARATHAZA*" HAS BEEN DEFEATED, IN THIS *ENDING* WE FIND ALSO A *BEGINNING*.

THE SKY-PALACE *FALLS*. DEPRIVED OF ENERGY, THE MYSTICAL FRAGMENTS *DISSOLVE*.

"A *RAIN* BECOMES A *MIST* BECOMES A *VAPOR*...

"... BECOMING *NOTHINGNESS* LONG BEFORE IT TOUCHES THE GROUND.

"ALL IS *GONE*, AS IF IT NEVER *WAS*.

"ALL SAVE ONE TINY FRAGMENT.

"A PIECE OF THE JEWELLED STAFF OF ARATHAZA.

"A GLISTENING GEMSTONE OF GREAT ANTIQUITY...

"HURLED BY THE FORCE OF THE MAGICAL EXPLOSION, IT SAILS A HUNDRED MILES ACROSS THE STATE.

"AND GREATER EVIL.

"TO LAND HERE...

5

"FOR A MOMENT THE STRANGE STONE LIES STILL AND QUIET, HALF SUNK IN THE RAIN-WET GROUND.

"THE MYSTIC FIRES WHICH LATELY SEEMED TO FLICKER DEEP WITHIN ITS AZURE FACETS ARE DIM, DYING.

"THEN, WITHOUT PRIOR WARNING, THE FLAMES GROW *BRIGHT*.

"AROUND THE GEM THE GROUND SEEMS TO *RIPPLE*, LIKE STILL WATERS DISTURBED BY A FALLING STONE.

"AND THEN...

"OBLIVIOUS TO THIS, THE MAN THE WORLD KNOWS AS *SUPERMAN* HEADS HOME TO THE SMALL APARTMENT HE MAINTAINS AS *CLARK KENT*.

"AND IT IS AT THIS POINT I ENTER THIS TALE."

WHAT THE...?

GREETINGS, SUPERMAN. DO NOT BE *ALARMED*.

A *TASK* AWAITS YOU.

"TASK"?

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, *STRANGER?* AND HOW DID YOU KNOW TO LOOK FOR ME IN CLARK KENT'S APARTMENT?

THE MORTAL WORLD HOLDS FEW THINGS SECRET FROM *ME*, SUPERMAN.

AS TO THE TASK I BRING YOU... BETTER THAT YOU SEE WITH YOUR OWN EYES.

IT IS A MATTER *DIFFICULT* TO EXPRESS IN TERMS YOU WOULD *COMPREHEND*.

AND SINCE I *COMPREHEND* JUST ABOUT *EVERYTHING*, I TAKE THAT TO MEAN THIS IS SOMETHING OF A *SUPERNATURAL* NATURE.

WELL, YOUR *TIMING* IS *LOUSY*, STRANGER.

I JUST GOT *FINISHED* WITH ONE MAGICAL MENACE, AND, AS USUAL, FOUND I'M NO MORE *INVULNERABLE* TO THE FORCES OF MAGIC THAN *ANY OTHER MORTAL*.

PLUS, THE WHOLE BUSINESS HAS LEFT ME *DEAD TIRED*.

FIND SOMEONE *ELSE*, STRANGER. SOMEONE WHOSE TALENTS *WORK* AGAINST MAGIC. *DOCTOR FATE*, OR...

SUPERMAN...

...I WANT *YOU*.

OH, FOR PETE'S SAKE!

STRANGER, I *TOLD* YOU I...

...I...

WHAT IN THE NAME OF...??

7

THAT IS WHY I NEED YOU, SUPERMAN.

"LIGHTNING CRACKLES ABOUT THE GIANT'S HIDEOUS HEAD.

"STONE AND EARTH FLOW LIKE LIQUID AROUND HIS BODY.

"HIS LAUGHTER BOOMS ACROSS THE SWIRLING LANDSCAPE.

"AND EVEN SUPERMAN FEELS THE TOUCH OF FEAR."

8

"BUT FEAR IS NOT A CONQUERING THING TO HIM.

"HE KNOWS THE POWER OF FEAR IS A LIE.

"HE KNOWS THAT FEAR CAN TRIUMPH ONLY WHEN THE WILL IS WEAK.

"AND HE HAS STRENGTH OF WILL IN ALMOST INFINITE AMOUNT.

"BY FORCE OF WILL HE SHEDS THE BONDS OF EARTH.

"BY FORCE OF WILL HE HURDLES MOUNTAINS, AND REACHES OUT TO TOUCH THE MANY-CRATERED MOON.

"BY FORCE OF WILL HE PUSHES BACK THE SHARP-FANGED THINGS THAT COME TO GNAW HIS VITALS.

"BY FORCE OF WILL HE TURNS HIS GAZE UPON THE SEETHING HORROR BELOW US ON THE HILLSIDE.

"YES, HE FEELS THE ICY TOUCH OF FEAR, BUT HE IS NOT COWED.

"HE IS SUPERMAN!"

9

"THE ADRENALINE PUMPS INTO HIS VEINS...

"CURIOUS...

"SUPERMAN IS AN ALIEN BEING, BORN NOT ON EARTH, BUT ON THE LONG-AGO-VANISHED PLANET KRYPTON.

"BUT, FOR ALL THAT, HE IS REMARKABLY HUMAN.

"HE THINKS AS A HUMAN BEING, FEELS AS A HUMAN BEING.

"HIS PHYSIOLOGY IS ALMOST INDISTINGUISHABLE FROM THAT OF AN EARTHLING.

"AND WHEN HE FIGHTS, HE FIGHTS FOR ALL MANKIND.

"FOR HE KNOWS THAT MIGHT WITHOUT MORALITY IS ONLY CORRUPTION DISGUISED.

"FOR THE GOOD, STRONG PRINCIPLES THAT SET HUMANITY APART.

"AND WHAT HE BATTLES HERE, THIS DAY, IS CORRUPTION PERSONIFIED!"

10

...HE... ATTACKS... US...

...HE... HURTS... US...

...HE... MUST... BE... PUNISHED...

UNGH!

WHUD!

GOOD LORD!

THERE'S AN *INTELLECT* BEHIND THAT THING!

IT'S NOT JUST A MINDLESS MASS OF MYSTICAL FORCES...

IT'S *ALIVE!!*

NO, SUPERMAN. DO NOT BE DECEIVED. THERE IS NO LIFE THERE.

ONLY THE *MEMORY* OF LIFE.

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, STRANGER? THAT THAT PILE OF EARTH ONLY *THINKS* IT'S ALIVE?

MAYBE YOU DON'T BELIEVE IN THE LATIN SAYING *COGITO, ERGO SUM.* *

ANYTHING THAT CAN *THINK* HAS A PRETTY GOOD CLAIM TO *LIFE* IN *MY* BOOK.

WHY DIDN'T YOU *TELL ME* IT WAS SENTIENT?

TO *AVOID* EXACTLY THIS REACTION, SUPERMAN.

I KNOW FULL WELL THE *CODE* YOU HAVE IMPOSED UPON YOURSELF--THE CODE AGAINST THE TAKING OF A LIFE.

BUT THAT IS NOT THE ISSUE HERE.

THE MIND OF THIS MONSTER IS *ALREADY DEAD.*

* "I THINK, THEREFORE I AM." -- ANDY

WH-WHAT?!?

NO TIME FOR EXPLANATIONS, SUPERMAN.

WITH EACH PASSING MOMENT, THE MOUNTAIN GROWS, SPREADING ITS *CORRUPTION* THROUGH THE SOIL.

DO WHAT YOU CAN TO *CONTAIN* IT, SUPERMAN. I MUST FACE THE *SOURCE* OF THE MADNESS *DIRECTLY.*

"INTO THE WHIRLING HURRICANE OF ROCK AND EARTH I HURL MYSELF.

"THE TORRENT RISES TO GALE FORCE. BUT I AM ALREADY *BEYOND* ITS EFFECT.

"I STEP ACROSS THE BARRIERS OF THE *DIMENSIONS.*

"I LEAVE BEHIND THE SWEET, WARM WORLD OF THE *LIVING...*

"AND ENTER THE *KINGDOM OF THE DAMNED!*"

LET THE *ACCUSED* APPROACH THE BENCH!

"ACCUSED"?

OF WHAT DO YOU ACCUSE ME?

OH, A GREAT CRIME.

THE GREATEST CRIME OF ALL.

YOU LIVE, STRANGER.

WHILE WE POOR SOULS MUST LANGUISH FOR ALL ETERNITY...

FORBIDDEN THE REWARDS OF THE AFTERLIFE.

IMPRISONED IN OUR ROTTED SHELLS, WAITING OUT THE AGES OF THE UNIVERSE.

SING ME NO SAD SONGS, DEAD THINGS.

I KNOW WHO YOU ARE, AND HOW YOU CAME TO YOUR UNHOLY STATE.

IN THE YEARS OF YOUR LIVING, YOU BROUGHT GREAT PAIN TO ALL AROUND YOU.

YOU SEIZED THE POWER RESERVED FOR THE GODS THEMSELVES, AND YOU KILLED WITHOUT COMPUNCTION.

NOW YOU DARE ASSUME THE ROLE OF INJURED PARTY?

YES!!

YES, WE DARE! WE DARE!!

FOR WE HAVE FOUND OURSELVES PRESENTED WITH A SECOND CHANCE.

A SECOND OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE OUR WAY INTO THE KINGDOM OF THE LIVING...

...AND WHEN OUR WILL IS SERVED, ALL THINGS THAT LIVE WILL PAY THE PENANCE FOR OUR SUFFERING!

13

WHOUF!!

I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THE PHANTOM STRANGER'S *UP TO* IN THERE...

...BUT OUR UGLY FRIEND JUST KICKED INTO *OVERDRIVE!*

THE FORCE OF THIS MYSTIC TORNADO HAS JUST INCREASED A *HUNDREDFOLD!*

AND THE STRANGER WAS *RIGHT!*

THE MOUNTAIN'S GATHERING MORE AND MORE EARTH INTO ITSELF.

IT'S ALREADY *DOUBLED IN SIZE!*

IF I DON'T FIND A WAY TO *STOP* IT, SOON...

...IT'S GOING TO *CRUSH* METROPOLIS WITH *ONE STEP!!*

14

I'VE GOT TO *STOP IT*-- AND THE ONLY WAY I CAN DO THAT IS IF I STOP WASTING TIME TRYING TO *FIGHT* IT.

I'VE GOT TO USE *LOGIC!*

OKAY-- THIS THING GROWS BY DRAWING THE SURROUNDING LANDSCAPE UP INTO ITS BODY.

AND ITS *FORWARD MOTION* IS A DIRECT EFFECT OF ITS *GROWTH.*

SO, IF I CAN STOP IT *GROWING*, I CAN STOP IT *MOVING*.

AND THE BEST WAY I CAN THINK OF TO DO THAT IS TO BORROW A PAGE FROM THE *FOREST RANGER'S HANDBOOK.*

TO STOP A FOREST FIRE, THEY SOMETIMES *BURN OUT* A SWATH OF LAND IN THE FIRE'S PATH.

THERE! I'VE BLASTED A CHANNEL DOWN TO THE NATIVE *BEDROCK!*

IF MY *GUESS* IS CORRECT...

I WAS *RIGHT!* THE MONSTER CAN ONLY ASSIMILATE LOOSE SOIL AND ROCKS.

IT CAN'T BREAK THE SOLID ROCK TO ADD TO ITSELF.

ITS MARCH TOWARDS METROPOLIS IS *HALTED!*

BUT FOR ALL THAT, WHAT I'VE DONE AMOUNTS TO LITTLE MORE THAN A *DELAYING TACTIC.*

THE MONSTER WON'T BE FULLY STOPPED UNTIL IT'S BEEN *DEACTIVATED.*

AND THAT, I SUSPECT, IS UP TO *THE PHANTOM STRANGER!*

15

SUPERMAN HAS *RESTRAINED* THE OUTER FORM OF THIS ABOMINATION.

NOW IT IS TIME TO ATTACK ITS FESTERING HEART.

YOU SPEAK TO ME OF *SUFFERING.*

WHO ARE YOU TO CRY FOUL, WHO HAVE BROUGHT INTO THIS WORLD SO MUCH *ANGUISH* BY YOUR OWN DEEDS?

WHO ARE YOU TO CLAIM THE PEACE OF QUIET DEATH, WHEN YOUR ONE GIFT TO YOUR FELLOW MEN WAS *PAIN.*

LOOK YOU *HERE,* DEAD THINGS.

LOOK UPON THE *FACES* OF YOUR *VICTIMS.*

LOOK UPON THEIR RUINED LIVES, THEIR SHATTERED DREAMS.

YOU ACCUSE THE LIVING OF A CRIME AGAINST YOU.

TELL THAT TALE TO *THESE* DEPARTED SOULS!

"TELL THE SHOPKEEPER, MURDERED ON CHRISTMAS EVE FOR A HANDFUL OF CRUMPLED DOLLAR BILLS.

"TELL THE SCHOOL-TEACHER, LEFT FOR DEAD IN A BLOOD-STAINED ALLEYWAY--FINALLY FORCED TO END HER OWN LIFE WHEN SHE COULD NO LONGER BEAR THE SHAME OF WHAT YOU DID TO HER.

"THE CHILD CONSUMED BY FLAME, BECAUSE ONE AMONG YOU ENJOYED THE SIGHT OF BUILDINGS BURNING.

"THE POLICEMAN, GUNNED DOWN IN THE LINE OF DUTY, BECAUSE HE STOOD BETWEEN YOU AND ESCAPE.

"THE FARMER, WHOSE HOME YOU INVADED, AND WHO DIED IN A HAIL OF POLICE FIRE WHEN YOU TRIED TO SHOOT YOUR WAY TO FREEDOM.

"THE JUDGE, EXPLODED IN HIS CAR BY YOUR VENGEFUL MACHINATIONS, BECAUSE HE HAD DELIVERED AGAINST YOU THE FULL WEIGHT OF THE LAW.

"THE INNOCENT BYSTANDER, RUN DOWN WHEN YOUR GETAWAY CAR JUMPED THE SIDEWALK.

"THE SCAPEGOAT, WRONGLY CONVICTED AND EXECUTED FOR YOUR CRIMES."

16

LIES!!

LIES! YOU DEFEND YOURSELF WITH SHAM!

THESE ARE NOT OUR VICTIMS. WE ARE THEIRS!

THEY HAD THE MONEY, THE BEAUTY, THE POWER!

ALL FOR THEM, AND NONE FOR US! WHEN WE DESERVED IT ALL! AND MUCH, MUCH MORE!

BUT WE WON IN THE END!

WE TOOK WHAT WE SAW AS OURS!

YES. YOU TOOK WHAT OTHERS HAD EARNED. EARNED BY THE SWEAT OF THEIR LABORS. AND, AT THE LAST, YOU TOOK THEIR LIVES.

LIVES WHICH WERE NOT YOURS TO GIVE OR TAKE.

AND NOW, EVEN IN THIS FALSE HALF-LIFE YOU HAVE BEEN GRANTED BY PERVERSE FATE...

...STILL YOU CLING TO THE TWISTED WAY OF THINKING THAT BROUGHT YOU TO YOUR SORRY STATE.

YOU ARE EVIL TO THE CORE, DEAD MEN. AND LIKE YOUR WORDS, YOU ARE A LIE. THE TRUE CENTER OF YOUR POWER LIES ELSEWHERE.

LET THE SOURCE OF THAT POWER BE REVEALED.

LET IT BE EXPOSED FOR WHAT IT IS.

THERE! THE FLAWED REMNANT OF A WIZARD'S POWER.

THE SHERABITE STONE -- FOCUS OF EVIL -- CATALYST OF CORRUPTION.

BUT A THING POWERLESS UNTO ITSELF, WITHOUT THE EVIL OF MANKIND TO FEED ITS HUNGER.

17

NO!
NO!
NOO!
NOO!!
NOO!!
YOU CANNOT TAKE OUR POWER!!
YOU WILL DIE FIRST!!
18

WHAT THE...?? THE WHIRL-WIND EFFECT HAS *STOPPED!*

IT'S *COLLAPSING!*

SUPERMAN!

YOU MUST ACT *QUICKLY* NOW!

THE FOCUS OF THE MONSTER'S POWER IS DIVERTED. *BREAK* ITS CONTACT WITH THE EARTH!

"BREAK"...? STRANGER, WHAT DO YOU...?

HE'S GONE!

OKAY... BEST NOT TO EVEN *THINK* ABOUT IT.

IF HE WANTS THIS THING *SEPARATED* FROM THE EARTH...

...I'M JUST THE BOY TO-- *UNGH*--DO IT!

19

GGNNNN-AHHGH!

UP...

...UP...

...AND AWAY!!

20

I'M NOT EXACTLY SURE WHAT THE STRANGER MEANS BY "*BREAKING CONTACT.*"

IT MAY BE ENOUGH IF THIS LUMP OF REAL ESTATE IS NO LONGER TOUCHING THE GROUND...

...BUT I THINK I'LL PLAY IT SAFE AND PUSH IT RIGHT OUT INTO *SPACE!*

THIS IS ABOUT AS *HIGH* AS I DARE GO. SHOULD BE ENOUGH, THOUGH.

I'VE CALCULATED THE TRAJECTORY. ONE GOOD *SHOVE* WILL SEND THIS THING INTO *ORBIT* AROUND THE *SUN!*

ONE MOMENT, SUPERMAN.

STRANGER!

I DIDN'T KNOW YOU COULD SURVIVE IN OUTER SPACE.

AND, COME TO THAT, HOW CAN I *HEAR* YOU?

OR YOU, ME?

THERE IS MUCH ABOUT ME YOU DO NOT KNOW, SUPERMAN.

MUCH THAT IS BEST *LEFT* UNKNOWN.

21

IF YOU INSIST.

BUT I'D STILL LIKE A FEW *ANSWERS*, STRANGER.

LIKE... *WHAT THE HECK WAS THAT ALL ABOUT??*

IT WAS ABOUT *EVIL*, SUPERMAN. THE *PERSIS-TENCE* OF EVIL.

IT WAS ALSO ABOUT *DEATH*, AND HOW SOMETIMES IT IS *NOT* SO FINAL A BARRIER AS WE MIGHT LIKE TO *THINK*.

HOW SO?

THERE ARE MANY FORCES THAT CAN BE *STRONGER* THAN DEATH, SUPERMAN.

LOVE CAN BE ONE.

SADLY, *HATE* CAN BE ANOTHER. HERE TODAY WE SAW WHAT *HATE* CAN DO, WHEN THE CHANCE ARISES.

WITHIN THAT MOUND OF EARTH, THERE GREW AND FESTERED A *HATRED* THAT LASTED *CENTURIES*. THE BURNING HATRED OF THE *GUILTY* FOR THE *INNOCENT*.

A HATRED THAT AT LAST FOUND RELEASE, THROUGH THE ANCIENT POWER OF THIS GEMSTONE. A SMALL PART OF THE SAME MAGIC THAT GAVE FORM AND SUBSTANCE TO ARATHAZA.

GLADLY.

YOU MAY *DESTROY* IT NOW, SUPERMAN.

BUT... YOU STILL HAVEN'T ANSWERED MY QUESTION ENTIRELY, STRANGER.

YOU STILL HAVEN'T TOLD ME WHAT FINALLY HAPPENED IN THERE.

KRK-KLK!

NOR HAVE I ANY INTENTION OF DOING SO, SUPERMAN.

FORGIVE THE CLICHÉ, MY FRIEND...

...BUT THERE *ARE* SOME THINGS MAN WAS NOT MEANT TO KNOW!

22

END

CROSS-OVER LEGENDS™ CHAPTER 17

3
MAR. 87

SUPERMAN

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

O, DEADLY DARKSEID!

BY JOHN BYRNE & TERRY AUSTIN

BYRNE

THE METROPOLIS GRANDE HOTEL!

NOT BAD. NOT BAD AT ALL.

IT'S BEEN A FEW YEARS SINCE THESE HALLS SAW MY SHADOW.

I WONDER IF ALL THE MUDSLINGERS AND RABBLE-ROUSERS DO AS WELL FOR THEMSELVES AS G. GORDON GODFREY?

COVERS OF *TIME*, *NEWSWEEK*, *U.S. NEWS* AND *PEOPLE*, ALL IN THE SAME WEEK.

AND NOW, AN INTERVIEW WITH THE *DAILY PLANET'S* STAR REPORTER.

G.G.G.'S A PUBLICIST'S DREAM COME TRUE!

YEAH?

WHOA! YOU MUST BE HULK HOGAN'S BIG BROTHER, RIGHT?

I'M *LOIS LANE*. I'M HERE TO SEE...

I KNOW WHO YER HERE T'SEE.

UP AGAINST TH' WALL, AN' *SPREAD* 'EM!

HEY!

GRIST!!

WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE *DOING!?!*

A THOUSAND PARDONS, MISS LANE. I FEAR MY BODYGUARD *OVER-REACHED* HIMSELF.

THAT'S NOT ALL HE OVER-REACHED.

DOES HE GENERALLY ACT THIS WAY WITH INVITED GUESTS?

NOT GENERALLY. HOWEVER, YOUR PAPER'S... AH... *RELATIONSHIP* WITH *SUPERMAN* DOES MAKE YOU RATHER *HOSTILE* TO MY CAUSE, NO?

BUT, COME--I WAS JUST ABOUT TO TAKE *MORNING* COFFEE ON THE TERRACE. WON'T YOU JOIN ME?

ANOTHER CUP, GRIST.

ON THE TERRACE?

DON'T YOU FIND IT A TAD *CHILLY* AT THIS TIME OF YEAR, MR. GODFREY?

NOT AT ALL. WHERE I COME FROM, IT'S ALWAYS SO STIFLINGLY *HOT*. THIS IS A... GLORIOUS CHANGE.!

"*WHERE YOU COME FROM.*" AND JUST *WHERE* MIGHT THAT BE, MR. GODFREY?

YOU MIGHT AS WELL HAVE DROPPED FROM ANOTHER *PLANET*, FOR ALL THE INFORMATION I WAS ABLE TO DIG UP ABOUT YOUR PAST.

MY PAST IS NOT IMPORTANT, MISS LANE.

WHERE I CAME FROM--EVEN WHO I AM-- IS *INCONSEQUENTIAL*, COMPARED TO MY *MISSION*.

AH, YES. YOUR ONE-MAN CAMPAIGN AGAINST SUPER-HEROES. WHICH IS WHY I'M HERE.

TELL ME, G. GORDON, DO YOU *REALLY* BELIEVE HEROES ARE THE *MENACES* YOU SAY THEY ARE?

WITH ALL MY *HEART*, MISS LANE. WITH EVERY *FIBRE* OF MY BEING.

BEFORE THE COMING OF THESE SO-CALLED "*SUPERHEROES*," THIS LITTLE WORLD WAS A BETTER PLACE.

PEOPLE LOOKED TO THEMSELVES, TO THEIR OWN *INNER STRENGTHS* --NOT TO THE *FALSE ICONS* OF GAUDILY-CLAD *VIGILANTES*.

I WISH TO SEE THAT PURE, UNSULLIED, SELF-RELIANCE RESTORED.

MORE COFFEE?

THANKS.

GOTTA HAND IT TO THE MAN, HE'S *PERSUASIVE!*

I HAVE TO KEEP *REMINDING* MYSELF HOW MUCH I *DISAGREE* WITH HIS POSITION.

AND JUST HOW DO YOU PROPOSE TO *ACCOMPLISH* THIS RESTORATION, MR. GODFREY?

WHY, BUT THE MOST *SIMPLE*, MOST *DIRECT* METHOD AVAILABLE, MISS LANE.

I PROPOSE TO SEE ALL THE SO-CALLED "*SUPERHEROES*" *DESTROYED*.

EXPUNGED!

WIPED FROM THE FACE OF THE EARTH FOR ALL TIME.!!

②

SUPERMAN

Created by JERRY SIEGEL & JOE SHUSTER

LEGENDS FROM THE DARKSIDE

JOHN BYRNE writer/penciller · TERRY AUSTIN inker · JOHN COSTANZA letterer · TOM ZIUKO colorist · ANDREW HELFER editor

GET OUT OF THE WAY!

FOR GOD'S SAKE, GET OUT OF THE WAY!!

WHAT THE...?!?

PLEASE!
EVERYONE STAY *CLEAR* OF ME!
I CAN'T GUARANTEE YOUR SAFETY IF YOU GET TOO CLOSE!
WHAT IN THE WORLD?!?
WHO IS THAT GUY?
WAIT A MINUTE! I *KNOW* HIM!
I SEEN HIS PITCHER IN TH' *DAILY PLANET.*

HEY, YOU'RE RIGHT! THAT'S *CLARK KENT!*
BUT WHAT'S HE RUNNIN'...
...FROM...?

BUT... IF THAT'S CLARK KENT, AND THIS... THING'S CHASING HIM...
WHERE'S *SUPERMAN?*
YEAH!
KENT GETS ALL TH' SUPERMAN STORIES IN TH' *PLANET.*
I THOUGHT THEY WUZ *BUDDIES...*

A LOT CLOSER THAN "*BUDDIES,*" FRIEND.
I *AM* SUPERMAN.
BUT THERE'RE A *COUPLE* OF GOOD REASONS WHY I CAN'T USE SUPERMAN TO GET OUT OF *THIS.*

NOT THE LEAST OF WHICH IS A *PRESIDENTIAL ORDER* BANNING SUPERHERO ACTIVITY--
AT LEAST UNTIL G. GORDON GODFREY AND HIS FOLLOWERS ARE PUT OUT OF BUSINESS.

④

PLUS...

WHATEVER THIS THING IS, IT CLEARLY CAME AFTER *CLARK KENT*...

AND UNTIL I CAN FIND OUT WHO'S BEHIND IT, I DARE NOT RISK REVEALING CLARK KENT HAS SUPERMAN'S POWERS.

BLAST! IT'S STILL WITH ME.

I CAN'T SHAKE THE FEELING IT'S *PLAYING* WITH ME.

THAT IT COULD *SNAG* ME ANY TIME IT WANTED TO.

WELL...

OKAY, I'LL PLAY ALONG.

FOR A WHILE.

I DON'T REALLY SEEM TO HAVE MUCH OF A *CHOICE*.

NOW...

WITH ANY KIND OF LUCK, I MAY BE ABLE TO LOSE IT IN THE MAZE OF SEWERS BENEATH THE STREETS OF *METROPOLIS*.

ASSUMING IT CAN EVEN COME AFTER ME, DOWN HERE.

UH HUH.

HUH! IT WENT RIGHT *THROUGH* MY COAT, WITHOUT HARMING THE MATERIAL.

SO...WHATEVER IT IS, APPARENTLY IT'S NOT A "*DEATH RAY.*"

UNLESS IT'S SOMEHOW KEYED TO MY PARTICULAR *ATOMIC STRUCTURE.*

BUT TO ACHIEVE THAT, THE PEOPLE BEHIND IT WOULD HAVE TO KNOW CLARK KENT IS AN *ALIEN* FROM THE PLANET *KRYPTON,* AND...

OH NO!

HEY!

LOOK OUT!

DAMN

6

WHAT'S THIS??

I SENT FORTH MY *OMEGA BEAMS* TO BRING SUPERMAN TO *APOKOLIPS*...

INSTEAD I AM DELIVERED THIS CRINGING MORTAL!

STRANGER, IS THIS YOUR DOING? I SENSE YOUR MEDDLING HAND IN THIS.

THEN YOUR SENSES LEAD YOU AWRY, *DARKSEID*. I AM HERE ONLY AS AN *OBSERVER*. YOU KNOW THAT.

THE PHANTOM STRANGER! DARKSEID! WHAT IN BLAZES IS GOING ON HERE?

NOW, LOOK... I'M CLARK KENT. I'M A WRITER FOR THE METROPOLIS DAILY PLANET.

I DEMAND TO KNOW WHERE I AM--AND HOW I GOT HERE!

"DEMAND"?

GREAT SCOTT! I DIDN'T EVEN SEE HIM MOVE! HOW CAN ANYONE SO HUGE BE SO FAST??

HE'S TRYING TO THROTTLE ME. DARKSEID DOESN'T REALIZE HE'S NETTED EXACTLY WHO HE WAS AFTER--AND UNTIL I CAN DISCOVER WHY HE WANTED SUPERMAN, I'D BETTER NOT LET HIM GUESS JUST YET!

NOW HEAR ME, EARTHLING. I KNOW NOT WHAT QUIRK OF FATE HAS BROUGHT YOU HERE INSTEAD OF THE ONE I SEEK, BUT KNOW THIS:

YOU ARE ON THE PLANET APOKOLIPS, AND ON APOKOLIPS THE SLIGHTEST WORD OF DARKSEID IS ABSOLUTE AND INESCAPABLE LAW!

HUURHRGLE!!

LET... GO... CHOKING...

BE STILL AND OBEDIENT, AND YOU MAY YET SURVIVE THE HOURS THAT LIE AHEAD. RAISE YOUR VOICE TO ME AGAIN, AND I WILL CRUSH YOU LIKE AN EGG!

HAVE A CARE, DARKSEID.

THERE IS NO CALL TO VENT YOUR RAGE AGAINST THIS MAN. HE IS NO PART IN YOUR TASKING OF THE EARTH. SEND HIM HOME.

FOR ONE WHO CLAIMS TO BE NO MORE THAN AN OBSERVER OF THIS PLAY, YOU'VE HAD MORE THAN YOUR SHARE OF COMMENTARY, STRANGER.

PERHAPS IT'S TIME I TESTED THE VALIDITY OF YOUR CLAIM. IF OBSERVER IS WHAT YOU BE, OBSERVER YOU SHOULD REMAIN, EVEN WHEN I DO...

...THIS!!!

SLUM
ARE
2
THE PHANTOM STRANGER ISN'T COMING AFTER ME, OF COURSE. HE KNOWS I'M SUPERMAN AND CAN *EASILY* SURVIVE A FALL LIKE THIS.
OBVIOUSLY HE'S INTENT ON CONVINCING DARKSEID HE'S NOT HERE TO INTERFERE IN THE DARK GOD'S PLANS.
WHATEVER THEY MAY BE.
I WONDER...
THE STRANGER SAID SOMETHING ABOUT DARKSEID "*TASKING*" THE EARTH. COULD APOKOLIPS BE SOMEHOW *BEHIND* THE ANTI-HERO FERVOR PROMOTED BY G. GORDON GODFREY?
9

IT'S A LIVE ONE!
GRAB 'IM!
DON'T LET 'IM GET AWAY!
WHAT...?!?
HE'S A BIG ONE!
DON'T MATTER!
HOLD 'IM!
STRIP 'IM!
TAKE EVERYTHING YOU CAN!
I GOT HIS EYE-THINGS!
OHH-H! THEY MAKE THE WORLD ALL BLURRY AND BEAUTIFUL!
GIMME!
NO! GEDDAWAY FUM ME! THEY MINE!
MINE!
WHADELSE HE GOT?
GIMME SOMPIN!!
HEY! WHAT'S HE GOT ON UNDER-NEATH...??
10

WELL, THAT'S PUT THE *CAT* AMONGST THE *PIGEONS.*

OBVIOUSLY THESE "*LOWLIES*" DON'T CARE MUCH FOR VICTIMS WHO FIGHT BACK!

THEY'RE ALL SCATTERING BACK TO THEIR "HIDEY-HOLES."

AND IT MIGHT NOT BE A BAD IDEA IF I *JOINED* 'EM.

UNTIL I CAN FIGURE OUT WHAT'S GOING ON AROUND HERE...

...THE LAST THING I WANT IS FOR DARKSEID TO KNOW I'M ON APOKOLIPS.

EVEN THOUGH MY PRESENCE HAS BEEN REVEALED TO THESE "*HUNGER DOGS*," THEY AREN'T LIKELY TO *REPORT* IT.

DARKSEID RULES BY ABSOLUTE *FEAR*, SO THE POOR DEVILS WHO LIVE DOWN HERE WILL PROBABLY BE TOO *TERRIFIED* TO APPROACH HIM.

"*POOR DEVILS.*

"*NOT AN ALTOGETHER INAPPROPRIATE PHRASE. GODS AND DEVILS IS WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT!*

"*UNCOUNTED AGES AGO, THE HOME-WORLD OF THE OLD GODS SPLIT ASUNDER, SHATTERED BY THEIR RAGNAROK, THEIR FINAL WAR.*

"*OUT OF THAT CATACLYSM WERE BORN TWO WORLDS.*

"*NEW GENESIS, THE BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL PLANET OF RENEWED HOPE...*

"*AND SPINNING FOREVER IN THE SHADOW OF ITS SISTER WORLD, DARK AND SINISTER APOKOLIPS.*"

"EACH OF THOSE WORLDS BROUGHT FORTH A RACE OF NEW GODS.

"NEW GENESIS SPAWNED A PEOPLE OF PURE AND NOBLE ASPECT, LED BY THE WISE AND BENEVOLENT BEING KNOWN AS HIGHFATHER.

"WHILE THE FOUL FIRE-PITS OF APOKOLIPS NURTURED CREATURES DEDICATED ONLY TO DARKNESS AND DEATH...

"...SHAPED BY THE CRUEL AND MERCILESS DARKSEID."

12

BUT... IT SEEMS THINGS ARE NO LONGER QUITE THE WAY I'VE UNDERSTOOD THEM TO BE.

I'VE SCANNED NEAR SPACE WITH MY *TELESCOPIC VISION*, AND I CAN FIND NO TRACE OF NEW GENESIS...

...ONLY A BELT OF ASTEROIDS ORBITING NEAR APOKOLIPS.

CAN SOME NEW *CATASTROPHE* HAVE BEFALLEN THE HOME OF THE FLOWERS OF HIGHFATHER?

HAS NEW GENESIS BEEN *DESTROYED?*

THAT WOULD BE A SAD BLOW TO THE FORCES OF GOOD IN THIS TROUBLED UNIVERSE.

WITHOUT HIS FELLOW GODS TO STAND AGAINST HIM, DARKSEID'S POWER MIGHT BE *MORE*...

HOLD IT!

PARA-DEMONS!

DARKSEID'S KILLER SENTRIES!

ARE THEY LOOKING FOR ME?

NO MATTER. I'M NOT *ABOUT* TO LET THEM *SPOT* ME!

SO THE FIRST THING I'D BETTER DO IS ARRANGE TO *BLEND IN* A LITTLE MORE.

MY COSTUME'S COLORS ARE LIKE A *NEON SIGN* AGAINST THE RELENTLESS *FILTH* OF APOKOLIPS.

THESE *RAGS* SHOULD BE JUST THE TICKET.

NOW I'LL JUST DUCK INTO THIS HANDY *NICHE* IN THE WALL...

... AND I CAN EMERGE LOOKING MORE LIKE A RESIDENT OF *ARMAGETTO*.

NOTHING I CAN DO ABOUT MY *SIZE*, BUT LUCKILY, SOME OF THESE SLUM DENIZENS ARE PRETTY *BIG*.

IT WOULD HELP IF I COULD *DIRTY* MYSELF UP A BIT, THOUGH. MY FACE AND HANDS ARE JUST TOO *CLEAN* FOR DOWN HERE.

BUT THE *AURA* MY BODY GENERATES -- THE SAME AURA THAT PROTECTS MY *SKIN-TIGHT* COSTUME -- PREVENTS GRIME FROM CLINGING LONG TO MY FLESH.

I'LL HAVE TO MAKE DO WITH STAYING IN THE SHADOWS AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE, UNTIL I CAN FIND A WAY OFF...

WHAT'S THAT?

PEOPLE *SHOUTING* UP AHEAD.

MORE THAN JUST SHOUTING.

IT'S THE BEGINNINGS OF A *RIOT!*

LET HER GO!!

YOU GOT NOTHING ON HER!

RELEASE HER!!

14

KEEP YER TRAPS SHUT, YOU CLOTS OF SOILED RAGS!

THIS WOMAN *PREACHED* AGAINST THE WORD AND WILL OF GREAT DARKSEID!

THE ONLY PENALTY FOR SUCH AS HER IS TO BE *HURLED* INTO THE *FIRE-PITS!*

SLUM AREA 27

WELL NOW... HERE'S AN INTERESTING *DILEMMA.*

IF THAT WOMAN IS *AGAINST* DARKSEID, IT KIND OF PUTS US ON THE SAME *SIDE.*

BUT THERE'S NOT MUCH CHANCE OF MY BEING ABLE TO *HELP* HER WITHOUT *REVEALING* MYSELF.

OF COURSE, THAT'S NOT REALLY MUCH OF A DILEMMA AT ALL, IS IT?

A LIFE IS IN DANGER, AND PROTECTING LIFE--EVEN NON-HUMAN LIFE--IS WHAT BEING SUPERMAN IS ALL ABOUT.

SO-OO...

OKAY...

HOLD IT RIGHT THERE, CREEPS.

WHO--??

I DUNNO!

WHO-ZAT??

YOU EVER *SEEN* HIM BEFORE?

NO!

WHO *IS* HE??

WHAT HAVE WE HERE?

A *RAM* AMONG THE *SHEEP?*

SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

PUNK

KA

15

NOW...) ARE YOU GOING TO MAKE ME *REPEAT* MYSELF, OR ARE YOU GOING TO LET HER GO?

WELL, WELL!! AND WHAT *HOLE* DID YOU CRAWL OUT OF?

I CAN'T IMAGINE HOW *GRANNY'S* RECRUITERS MISSED *YOU.*

HE - HE'S *MAGNIFICENT!*

WHERE *COULD* HE HAVE COME FROM?

CAN HE BE SOME PART OF THE *PLAN?*

NO MATTER!

THE SHOCK TROOPS ARE *DISTRACTED.*

I HAVE TO TAKE THE CHANCE TO SLIP AWAY, OR EVERYTHING I'VE *ESTABLISHED* WILL BE *FORFEIT!*

WHOEVER YOU ARE, GIANT, I DON'T THINK I'LL WASTE MY *MEN* FIGHTING YOU.

THERE ARE MORE *EFFICIENT* WAYS OF DEALING WITH SUCH AS YOU!

FWEEEEEEEEEEEEEE

WHAT...??

A HYPER-SONIC WHISTLE!

WHAT'S HE UP...

... TO...

PACIFIER!!

16

DO YOUR DUTY!

AT ONCE, SHOCK TROOPER.

COME HERE, LITTLE ONE. TEST YOUR PUNY MIGHT AGAINST *ME!*

WHOA!

YOU'RE A *BIIIG* KITTY-CAT!

AND LIKE EVERYTHING ELSE ON APOKOLIPS, ABOUT TEN TIMES *FASTER* THAN I'D EXPECT!

17

YOU *MOCK* ME? YOU DARE MOCK A *PACIFIER?*

LEARN THE *ERROR* OF SUCH WORDS.

AN ATOMIC FLAME! I CAN FEEL THE BLISTERING HEAT EVEN THROUGH MY *INVULNERABLE* SKIN!

FWOOSH!

BETTER NOT RISK LETTING HIM *HIT* ME WITH IT. MY BEST BET...

...IS TO KEEP THIS OVER-SIZED *TINKERTOY* OFF-BALANCE!

YOUR STRENGTH *IS* GREAT, SMALL ONE...

BUT THE POWER OF A PACIFIER IS *UNMATCHED!!*

UNGH!!

18

NOT BAD...

ATOMIC FLAME... SPEED... PHENOMENAL STRENGTH...

WHAT ELSE DO YOU HAVE...

?

UH OH...

RRRRRRAAK

RASHH!

HA HA HA HA HA HA!!

THE FORCE OF YOUR IMPACT CAUSED THE WHOLE WALL TO COLLAPSE ON TOP OF YOU!

AND YOU ARE *SQUASHED!*

SQUASHED LIKE THE INSOLENT *MAGGOT* YOU...

EH?

YOU... SURVIVE...??

THAT COLLAPSE WAS ENOUGH TO DESTROY A *SQUADRON* OF SHOCK TROOPERS!

SORRY TO *DISAPPOINT* YOU, UGLY.

BUT I HAVE NO *INTENTION* OF BEING DESTROYED JUST YET.

I HAVE A LOT OF *UNFINISHED BUSINESS* BACK ON EARTH...

AND ALTHOUGH I SUSPECT THAT'S NOT THE *EASIEST* PLACE TO GET TO FROM HERE...

I HAVE *EVERY* INTENTION OF GETTING HOME IN ONE PIECE!

KANG!

NOW... SINCE THIS *SUIT* YOU'RE WEARING SEEMS TO BE MADE OF SOME SUBSTANCE THAT *BLOCKS* MY *X-RAY VISION*..

LET'S OPEN IT UP AND HAVE A LOOK AT WHAT WE'RE REALLY...

... FIGHTING...

HISSSSSSSSS

20

A GLOMMER!!

A GLOMMER!

THERE'S A GLOMMER INSIDE 'AT PACIFIER!

GET BACK!!

BLASTED THING'S SOME KIND OF... *PSYCHIC PARASITE!*

IT'S TAPPING INTO MY *NERVOUS SYSTEM!*

TAKING CONTROL OF MY *MOTOR REFLEXES!*

ALL MY MUSCLES ARE... *SPASMING*... LIKE THEY'RE TRYING TO *TEAR* OUT OF MY BODY!

WE'RE... OFF THE GROUND!

IT'S MANIPULATING MY *FLYING POWER*... CARRYING US UP!

CAN'T *STOP* IT!

THE *HEAT*... AGAINST MY BACK...

THE THING'S DRIVING US BOTH TOWARDS ONE OF THE *FIRE-PITS!*

I'M NOT SURE EVEN MY *INVULNERABLE* BODY CAN SURVIVE IN THAT *FURNACE!!*

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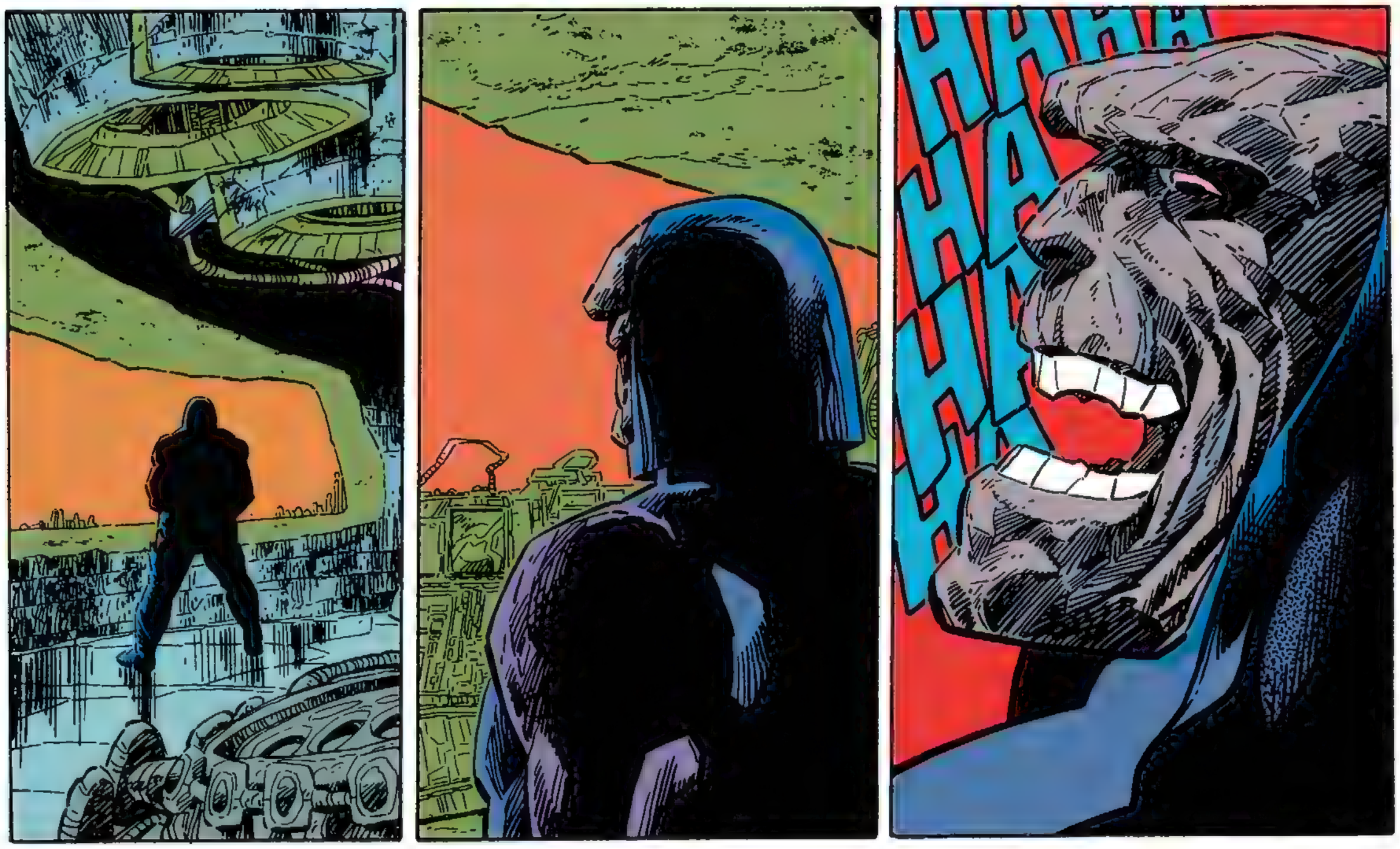
HAHAHA

CROSS-OVER LEGENDS™ CHAPTER 18

426
MAR. 87

THE ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN®

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

By Marv Wolfman & Jerry Ordway

IN THE VASTNESS OF SPACE, THERE IS A WORLD OF BLACKNESS. A DARK, BLOODIED SCAR WHOSE NAME IS ONLY WHISPERED.

FOR NONE IS BRAVE ENOUGH TO SHOUT OUT-- APOKOLIPS!

ABOVE ARE SEAS OF ROILING TAR. ON THE HORIZON, THE SKY CONSUMES ITSELF BY FIRE. BELOW ARE THE FEARED FIRE-PITS...

...WHERE ARE DUMPED THE WASTES OF HELL.

SLAG, SLAG. NOTHING BUT SLAG!

WHERE'S THE STINKING TANGIBLES?

TREASURES? MACHINES? ANYTHING, ANYTHING BUT MUCK.

METAL WASTE, WORTH LITTLE MORE THAN SPIT.

WASTE OF PRECIOUS TIME, THAT'S WHAT THIS IS.

EH? SOMETHING WEIGHTY TUGS AT MY LINE.

CLOTH? AND BLOOD RED, TOO.

BUT WOULD GREAT DARKSEID ALLOW ANY OF US HUNGER DOGS TO BETTER OURSELVES?

NAHH, NAH, WHAT CARES HE OF US? SPIT! SPIT! WE LOYAL FOLLOWERS ARE LESS THAN SPITTLE TO HIM.

FROM THE DREGS...

THE ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN®

Created by JERRY SIEGEL & JOE SHUSTER

BRAAK

A MAN ? AND HE'S BREATHING?

HE SURVIVED THE FIRE-PITS ? BY THE STENCH-SOAKED SCUM OF APOKOLIPS-- THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!

ONLY THAT ODIOUS NEW GOD ORION HAS EVER SURVIVED BEFORE.

WHICH MAKES THIS SOME SORT OF MIRACLE.

HOW MUCH, THEN, CAN I GET FOR HIM, EH ?

MARV WOLFMAN
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LETTERER
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DO I DARE ATTEMPT TO SELL HIM TO GREAT DARKSEID?

ONLY *HE'D* HAVE TREASURES WORTH PARTING WITH FOR THIS.

NO, HE'D PROBABLY HAVE ME *STUFFED* AND MOUNTED OVER THE FIRE-PITS FOR EVEN *SUGGESTING* THE SALE.

THE QUESTION REMAINS--WHAT TO DO?

AND I'VE NO ANSWER. PITY THE POOR HUNGER DOG WITHOUT BRAINS ENOUGH TO KNOW HIS PATH TO WEALTH AND GLORY.

HMMM. PERHAPS THE *OTHERS* AT THE MEETING PLACE MIGHT KNOW.

GRAGGIN'S BACK, WITH MORE FALSE TREASURE FROM THE PITS.

WHAT HAVE YOU GOT THIS TIME, GRAGGIN? A TUBE? A CHAIN? SOME WASTE POT?

LAUGH ALL YOU WANT, YOU DEMENTED SLIME-CRAWLING SLUGS. GRAGGIN'S STRUCK IT RICH.

LOOK HERE. A SURVIVOR DREDGED FROM THE HELLISH DEPTHS OF THE DEEPEST PIT. THAT'S RIGHT--A *LIVE* ONE, AND HE'S *ALL MINE.*

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JOO HEAR WHA OL' GRAGS SAID HE FOUND? A SURVIVOR. A LIVIN' CORPSE NOT EVEN *SCORCHED* BY THE FLAMES.

SLUM AREA 4

A HUMAN... TOO CLEAN TO BE A HUNGER DOG, TOO WELL-FED TO BE A DEMON.

PERHAPS FROM NEW GENESIS? A NEW GOD?

HERE? IN ARMAGETTO? THE GODS AREN'T HALF THE FOOLS WE HUNGER DOGS ARE.

SPREAD THE WORD--A SURVIVOR WAS FOUND.

IMPOSSIBLE. THE FLAMES BURN ALL FLESH.

EVEN AS THE HEAT DESTROYS THE *SOUL*.

YOU HEARD THE WORD... GO WITH SPEED AND TELL AMAZING GRACE THE TALES WE HEAR.

BUT FIRST DEMAND *CASH* FOR OUR SECRET. THAT SHE-WITCH CAN CERTAINLY *AFFORD* TO BE GENEROUS.

THE MAGGOT WANTED *MONEY* FOR TALES SHOUTED THROUGH THE STREETS. I, OF COURSE, GOT RID OF HIM.

GRACE, DID YOU *HEAR* WHAT MANGAL HAS SAID? A HUMAN SURVIVED THE PIT?

I HEARD HIS GIBBERISH, BUT I HAD ALREADY *KNOWN* THE FACTS. LEAVE ME NOW...

...I MUST *THINK*.

LOOK! GRAGGIN SPOKE THE TRUTH.

BAH! THAT SLIME-SLOBBERING INSECT COULDN'T SPEAK THE TRUTH IF HIS MOTHER'S LIFE WERE AT STAKE...

...EVEN IF HE *HAD* A MOTHER.

I FISHED HIM OUT OF THE FIRE-PITS. THAT MAKES HIM *MINE* TO SELL.

NOTHING CAN SURVIVE THE PITS.

IT'S ALL A *LIE*.

GRAGGIN *ALWAYS* LIES.

IF HE SURVIVED THE PITS, I SAY *PROVE* IT.

I SAY WE DUMP THEM *BOTH* IN THE PITS AND BE *DONE* WITH IT ALL.

YEAH. BURN THEM BOTH.

WAIT, WAIT. I'LL *PROVE* WHAT I SAY.

THE *TORCH*, SYRA.

SEE? *SEE?*

HIS SKIN DOESN'T BURN.

WHAT DO YOU PITIFUL LITTLE BELLY-CRAWLING WORMS THINK OF ME NOW, EH?

THE DEMON'S ALIVE?

HOLD STILL, MAN, I WASN'T FINISHED SETTING YOU AFIRE.

UNNNN

WHAT? *MY HAND!*

MY HAND! MY HAND!

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GRAGGIN'S TRYING TO FOOL US!
KILL THEM BOTH!
THROW THEM INTO THE FIRE-PITS!
THE FIRE-PITS!
BURN THEM ALL!
I NEED YOU NOW, FRIEND. SAY SOMETHING OR WE'RE BOTH COOKED MEAT.
TELL THEM I SAVED YOU.
HURRY. YOU HEAR ME?
MY HAND... IT'S BURNED.
HOW?
TAKE THEM NOW!
STOP!
STAND ASIDE, YOU MINDLESS RABBLE.
IT'S AMAZING GRACE.
WHY IS SHE HERE?
HAS THE MIND-NUMBING MISERY OF ARMAGETTO DESTROYED ALL YOUR SENSES?
CAN YOU NOT RECOGNIZE YOUR SAVIOR?

WITCH, WE WON'T LISTEN TO YOUR LIES. GIVE THE STRANGER TO US. HE MUST *DIE!*

THEN OUR ETERNAL SACRIFICE WILL NEVER ABATE. CAN'T YOU SEE HE IS *NOT* FROM APOKOLIPS?

HE IS THE ONE WE'VE BEEN *WAITING* FOR.

HE WILL LEAD US FROM THE HELL-FORGED CHAINS OF ARMAGETTO TO THE PRINCELY PEAKS OF APOKOLIPS!

NO. HE'LL HARM US FIRST!

OR GREAT DARKSEID WILL *PUNISH* US FOR HIDING HIM!

HE IS A DEVIL *SENT* TO DESTROY US!

THIS ONE IS NO AGENT OF LORD DARKSEID.

NO, WHAT GRAGGIN SAID IS TRUE. I SAW THE SCAVENGER PLUCK HIM FROM THE FLAMES.

YOU DID?

WHY IS THE WITCH LYING? SHE *WANTS* SOMETHING FROM ME... I SHOULD MAKE HER *PAY* FOR AGREEING...

IS THAT NOT CORRECT, SCAVENGER?

I *SAW* YOU.

TELL THEM.

NOW--

I... I... UHHH...

YES... *YES.* SHE WAS THERE.

IF HE *IS* OUR SAVIOR, WHERE IS HE FROM?

NEW GENESIS WAS *DESTROYED!*

HE IS *NOT* ONE OF THE NEW GODS... BUT HE WILL AID US IN OUR BATTLE AGAINST DARKSEID THE DAMNED.

LISTEN TO ME, BRAINLESS RABBLE-- AT LAST WE HOPELESS HAVE *HOPE*. WE CAN RISE FROM THE MIRE.

THIS STRANGER... THIS MAN... THIS *SUPER MAN*-- WILL LEAD US TO VICTORY.

HE IS THE SAVIOR!

HE IS THE SAVIOR! THE SAVIOR! THE SAVIOR!

SHOW US THE WAY, SAVIOR, AND WE SHALL *FOLLOW YOU!*

WE HAVE BEEN *AWAITING* THIS TIME FOR *EONS*.

DARKSEID SHALL BE NO MORE!

THE HUNGER DOGS WILL BE VICTORIOUS!!

SO, THE SNIVELLING CURS BAY AT THIS SO-CALLED SAVIOR, PRAYING FOR *RESCUE*.

CAN IT TRULY BE NO ONE RECOGNIZES THEIR NEW HOPE? ARE THEY EVEN MORE MINDLESS THAN I HAD BELIEVED?

PAH! IT MATTERS NOT.

I HAVE TOLERATED THE HUNGER DOGS LONG ENOUGH.

AMAZING GRACE AND HER MINIONS MUST LEARN THEIR LESSON.

DARKSEID'S WILL IS TO BE EVER OBEYED!

IT HAS BEEN TOO LONG SINCE BLOOD STAINED THE GROUNDS OF APOKOLIPS.

LET THE PARA-DEMONS BE UNLEASHED!

DARKSEID'S DISCOVERED OUR PLAN!

HE'S SENT HIS DEMONS TO DESTROY US!

DO SOMETHING, SAVIOR!

SAVE US NOW!

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YES, SAVIOR--

--DO SOMETHING!

MY MIND'S SO MUDDLED...

...HARD TO THINK STRAIGHT...

...BUT I CERTAINLY KNOW WHAT I SHOULD DO.

PAL--

--YOU'RE ABOUT TO CHANGE YOUR PLANS.

IF I EASE MY GRIP, YOU'LL DO AS I SAY?

AKKKK

AKKKKK

FOR YOUR SAKE, I HOPE THAT WAS A "YES."

GET READY FOR A LITTLE *TORPEDO* ACTION!

THERE...! PERFECT!

I HEAR SOMEONE *BEHIND* ME. SOME WEAPON IS BEING *PRIMED*.

NO PROBLEM...

10

STRANGE, I FEEL MORE CLEAR-HEADED IN THE AIR THAN I DID ON THE GROUND!

STILL DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON...

...NOT THAT I *NEED* TO IN ORDER TO TAKE SIDES!

C'MON, GUYS -- I'M WAITING FOR YOU!

DON'T BE SHY! I'M ONLY *ONE MAN!*

ONE NOT-VERY-HAPPY MAN!

UNNHH! WHILE I WAS CONGRATULATING MYSELF, ANOTHER SWOOPED IN FROM BEHIND!

LOSING MY BALANCE -- OKAY, KEEP CALM... *THINK* THIS OUT.

EVEN IF IT *IS* STILL *DIFFICULT* TO THINK STRAIGHT.

UH-OH! UGLY'S BEING JOINED BY *EVEN UGLIER.*

FORMING A *SANDWICH...*

...WITH *ME* IN THE MIDDLE.

BUT NOT IF I CAN *TWIST* AROUND...

LET FRIEND MEET FRIEND.

YAGGAHHH

AMAZING GRACE WAS RIGHT!

HE IS OUR SAVIOR!

UNHHH... MIND'S CLOUDING OVER AGAIN... WHAT IN HEAVEN'S NAME IS *WRONG* WITH ME?

THERE, DARKSEID!

THIS SPELLS THE *END* OF YOUR TYRANNY!

THE PARA-DEMON'S ARMOR IS WORTH A SMALL FORTUNE!

I CLAIM IT FIRST!

NO-- ME!

YOU *SAVED* US...

...MY FRIEND.

I... GUESS I DID.

WITH ONE GOOD HAND, YOU ROUTED DARKSEID'S FEARSOME DEMONS.

HEAR ME NOW, HUNGER DOGS! IS THERE *ANY* AMONGST YOU WHO DOUBTS--

--HE IS THE ONE AND TRUE SAVIOR!!

"I HAVE GRAVE DOUBTS..."

,,, AND THE UNCERTAINTY SWELLS WITHIN ME,,,

UNCERTAINTY--AND SOMETHING MORE--FOR THOUSANDS OF MILES FROM THE GHETTOS OF APOKOLIPS, LORD HIGHFATHER, LEADER OF THE NEW GODS, FEELS SOMETHING AKIN TO...

...DREAD!

I NEED ANSWERS ONLY *THE SOURCE* CAN PROVIDE.

BUT *WILL* IT? WILL THE *POWER* WHICH SUMMONS ME ANSWER MY CALL?

CAN EVEN *THE SOURCE* COMPREHEND THE DISTURBANCE THAT I FEAR MAY *SHATTER* THIS UNIVERSE?

NOW-- IT IS *TIME!*

LET THE TRUTH BE *WRITTEN* FOR ALL TO SEE!

AND THE *BURNING* HAND OF THE SOURCE ENSCRIBES THE WORDS WHICH HIGH-FATHER HAS MOST FEARED,,,

HIGHFATHER, WHAT DID THE SOURCE TELL YOU?

QUIET, LIGHTRAY-- CAN YOU NOT *SEE* HIGHFATHER'S COUNTENANCE?

THE *NEWS*, I FEAR, IS GRIM.

INDEED, ORION. THE SOURCE HAS SPOKEN OF *TERROR*.

I NOW FEAR FOR THE SAFETY OF US ALL.

ON APOKOLIPS, AN UNUSUALLY CONTRASTING MOOD PREVAILS...

WELL, GRACE, LUCK HAS BEEN ON *OUR* SIDE, AT LONG LAST.

INDEED, RONO.

WITH THE *SAVIOR* AT OUR SIDE, VICTORY IS AT LAST WITHIN OUR GRASP.

I CAN ALREADY *SMELL* DARKSEID'S DEFEAT.

AYE, AND A *SWEET* FRAGRANCE IT IS. LONG MAY IT *LINGER*.

COME ... I FEEL THE RUSH OF GOOD FORTUNE.

CELEBRATION IS NECESSARY.

A TOAST THEN...

... TO OUR HOPES...

... OUR REVOLUTION...

... AND OUR *VICTORY!*

HOW ARE YOU *NOW*, SAVIOR?

CONFUSED. I DON'T UNDERSTAND...

WITH ALL THAT HAS *HAPPENED* TO YOU, SAVIOR, IT WOULD BE A MIRACLE IF YOU *DID* UNDERSTAND.

HOW ARE YOUR *PAINS*? YOU WERE SEVERELY *INJURED*.

THIS BATH IS EXCEPTIONALLY *SOOTHING*.

THE *HERBS* SHOULD HEAL YOUR WOUNDS.

ANGLAR, TAKE AWAY THE SAVIOR'S TRAPPINGS AND SEE IF HIS *NEW* GARB IS READY.

INDEED, AMAZING GRACE.

WAIT. DON'T--

--MY *UNIFORM*!?!

YOU *NO* LONGER NEED IT, SAVIOR. WE HAVE PREPARED NEW GARMENTS BEFITTING A WARRIOR.

YOU *DO* UNDERSTAND.

I... I DO.

YES, AT LAST A WARRIOR HAS COME TO APOKOLIPS WHO IS *WORTHY* OF AMAZING GRACE.

YOU AND I, SAVIOR-- WHAT A *TEAM* WE WILL BE.

SOON, WE SHALL RULE THIS DECADENT WORLD--TOGETHER.

15

HERE, HUNGER DOGS-- YOU CAN POSSESS THIS *FETISH* DRESSED IN THE SAVIOR'S OWN *CLOTH!*

HIS POWER CAN BE *YOURS!*

PURCHASE IT NOW, MY FRIENDS--AND WITH IT, WE SHALL *TOPPLE* DARKSEID'S THRONE!

THE SAVIOR SHALL LEAD US TO *FREEDOM!* JOIN HIM NOW!

HIS *SYMBOL*-- I MUST HAVE IT!

NO ONE CAN SEE ME. GOOD.

DARKSEID SHALL SEE HIS *REIGN OF TERROR* HAS COME TO AN *END!*

FROM THAT DESPOT'S DARK RULE--

--FROM HIS AGES-LONG TYRANNY...

...A NEW ORDER SHALL *TRIUMPH!*

THE SAVIOR WILL LIBERATE US!

APOKOLIPS SHALL BE FREE!

16

"AMAZING GRACE.' THE SAVIOR LEADS OUR FORCES INTO BATTLE. THE WAR HAS BEGUN.'"

"THEN SETTLE BACK, FAITHFUL ONE. AND ENJOY!"

DARKSEID'S TROOPS HAVE GREATER WEAPONS THAN WE, BUT THAT WILL NOT STOP US! THE HUNGER DOGS CAN NEVER BE DEFEATED! OUR NUMBER IS *LEGION*!

FIGHT ON!

FREEDOM WILL BE OURS!

IN THE FIRST ASSAULT, ONE THOUSAND HUNGER DOGS FALL BEFORE THE FORCES OF DARKSEID. BUT THE TEN THOUSAND BEHIND THEM PRESS FORWARD. AND BEHIND THOSE TEN THOUSAND YET ANOTHER WAVE STANDS READY...

JERRY ORDWAY 9·86

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...FOR THIS IS WAR...

...AND THE HUNGER DOGS LIVE AND DIE FOR BATTLE!

BUT, ALTHOUGH TRAINED IN GRANNY GOODNESS' DISMAL MILITARY ORPHANAGES, AND LED BY THE FIERCEST FIGHTING MACHINE THEY HAVE EVER SEEN, DARKSEID'S SUPERIOR WEAPONS SOON BEGIN TO TAKE THEIR TOLL.

FIVE THOUSAND MORE ARE DOWNED IN THE FIRST TWENTY-THREE MINUTES.

ANOTHER TEN THOUSAND FALL IN THE SECOND AND THIRD ASSAULT.

BLOODIED, WEARY, HOPELESSLY LACKING IN WEAPONS, THE SURVIVORS FIGHT ON.

THIS IS A WAR THE HUNGER DOGS CANNOT HOPE TO WIN.

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FIGHT ON! FOR AMAZING GRACE! FOR APOKOLIPS!

AND FIGHT ON THEY DO. FOR EACH HUNGER DOG WHO FALLS, TWO OF DARKSEID'S LEGION ARE CUT DOWN.

VICTORY IS OURS!

ALL PROCEEDS AS PLANNED.

THEIR *LUST* PUSHES THEM EVER ONWARD. I DOUBT IF *ANYTHING* COULD EASILY STOP THEM.

AND YET, MY DEAR, THE TIME OF TURNING HAS COME.

I KNOW.

AND I AM, AS ALWAYS, READY TO SERVE.

GRACE...

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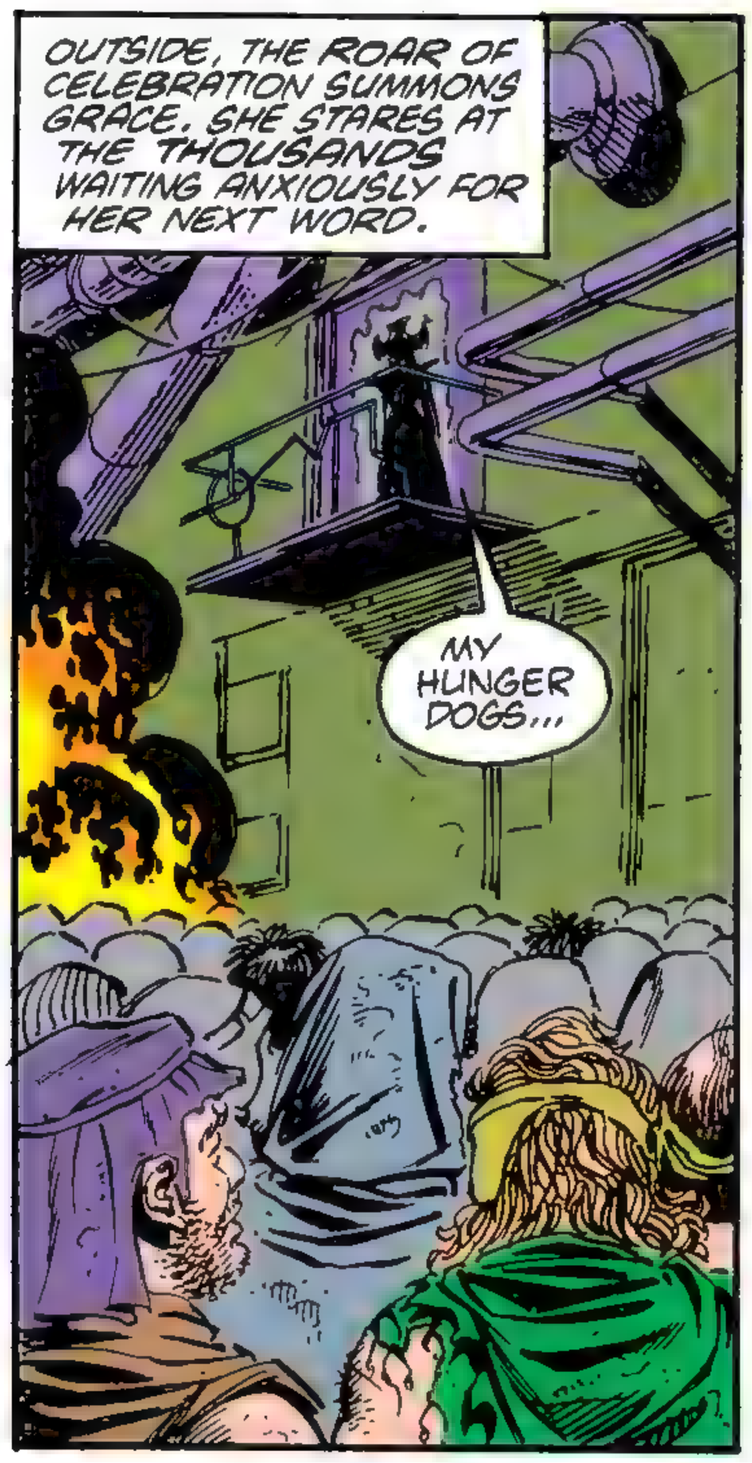
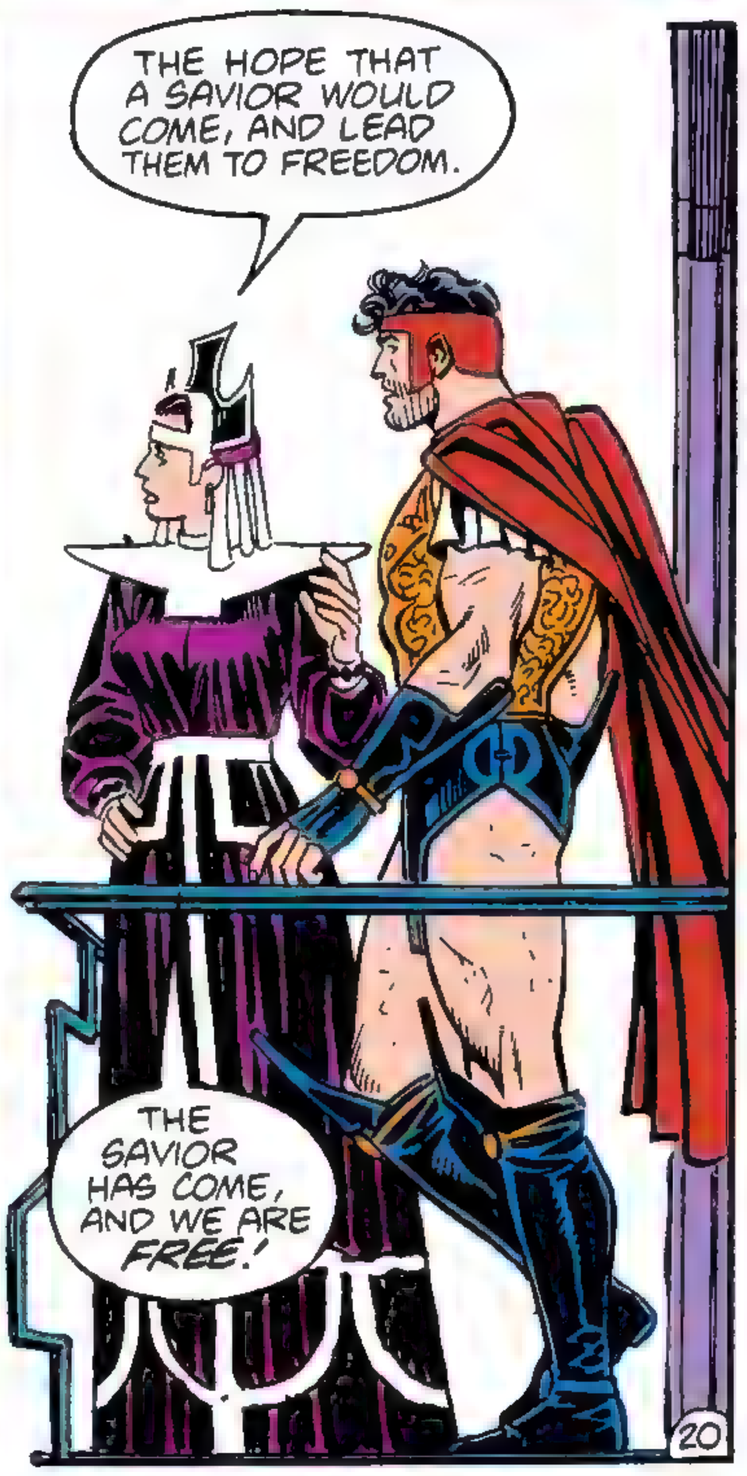
,,, VICTORY IS OURS!
AND I'VE COME TO CLAIM MY PRIZE!

YOUR LOVE FUELED THE BURNING IN MY BREAST.
TO WIN THAT LOVE, VICTORY HAD TO BE MINE.

LATER, SAVIOR,,, WE WILL REJOICE IN PRIVATE.
INDEED,,, THE SAVIOR HAS SERVED ME WELL.
EH?


OUTSIDE, THE ROAR OF CELEBRATION SUMMONS GRACE. SHE STARES AT THE THOUSANDS WAITING ANXIOUSLY FOR HER NEXT WORD.
MY HUNGER DOGS,,,

VICTORY IS NEAR. THIS HAS BEEN A TIME OF UNREST ON APOKOLIPS.
A TERRIBLE TIME. BUT THROUGHOUT IT, THERE HAS BEEN A SINGLE BURNING HOPE IN THE HEARTS OF THE DOWNTRODDEN.


THE HOPE THAT A SAVIOR WOULD COME, AND LEAD THEM TO FREEDOM.
THE SAVIOR HAS COME, AND WE ARE FREE!
20

THE SAVIOR!

ALL PRAISE THE SAVIOR!

SILENCE. LET ME SPEAK.

YOU'VE HAD THE HOPE FOR FREEDOM BURN WITHIN YOU LONG ENOUGH.

INDEED, IT HAS *SUSTAINED* YOU THROUGH THE TERRIBLE MISERIES YOU SUFFER EACH DAY.

THAT HOPE FOR A SAVIOR IS WHAT HAS DRIVEN YOU AGAINST THE RULE OF DARKSEID.

AND NOW IT IS TIME FOR THE *GREAT CHANGE.*

LET THAT LAST GREAT HOPE--

ARMAGETTIC

--BE ENDED!

THE PARA-DEMONS SWOOP LOW, THEIR WEAPONS DRAWN AND FIRING. AND, WITHIN MOMENTS...

...THE HUNGER DOGS ARE ROUTED!

21

THE *REVOLUTION* IS OVER, GRACE.

WE HAVE *WON.*

YOU SERVED US WELL, SAVIOR.

IF YOU DON'T MIND, GRACE, I'D AS SOON HEAR THAT FROM MY *TRUE MASTER.*

WELL?

YOU HAVE LED THEM ALONG THE PATH THEY SO DESIRED, AND AT THE END THEY FOUND ONLY PAIN AND SUFFERING.

THE SURVIVORS-- IF SURVIVORS THERE BE-- WILL TELL THE REST OF THE HUNGER DOGS.

THE FLAME OF HOPE WILL FLICKER AND GROW COLD AGAIN.

YOU HAVE INDEED SERVED ME WELL, MY SON.

CROSS-OVER LEGENDS™ CHAPTER 19

586
MAR. 87

SUPERMAN® & THE NEW GODS®

ACTION COMICS®

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

ABOVE THE BLAZING FIRE-PITS...

ORION™ VS. SUPERMAN®... CHAMPION OF APOKOLIPS!

BY JOHN BYRNE & DICK GIORDANO

BEYOND SPACE, BEYOND TIME...

A PLACE WHERE THE NARROW RULES OF MAN ARE BENT ASIDE, AND GODS REIGN!

HE'S FALLING BEHIND AGAIN. WHY DOES HE *HESITATE?*

ORION! MAKE HASTE, MY FRIEND! THERE'S NOT A MOMENT TO LOSE!

G·2935

YOU'RE TOO *QUICK* TO RACE INTO THE JAWS OF DEATH, *LIGHTRAY.*

WHAT MUST TRANSPIRE AHEAD WILL AWAIT OUR COMING, NEVER FEAR.

WHY SUCH *RETICENCE, ORION? HIGHFATHER* SENT US ON A MISSION OF *MERCY.*

WHY DOES YOUR WARRIOR'S SOUL *WEAKEN* NOW?

IS IT WEAKNESS YOU SEE IN *ME*, LIGHTRAY? HOW OFTEN IN THE PAST YOU'VE *COUNSELLED* ME TO LET GO THE WAYS OF WAR, AND LEARN TO *LAUGH* AGAIN.

NOW YOU *CHIDE* ME WHEN I PAUSE BEFORE HURLING MYSELF ONCE MORE INTO THE BATTLEFIELD.

I STAND *CORRECTED*, ORION. BUT HIGH-FATHER BADE US GO WITH GREATEST HASTE. HE SPOKE AS IF THE FATE OF ALL *NEW GENESIS* WAS HUNG UPON OUR SPEED.

"*NEW GENESIS.*" LIKE ALL THE OTHERS, YOU TALK AS IF THE *FLOATING CITY* WERE THE WORLD ITSELF.

LOOK AROUND YOU, LIGHTRAY.

THESE TUMBLING *ASTEROIDS* ARE ALL THAT NOW REMAIN OF THE ONCE-GLORIOUS PLANET OF YOUR BIRTH.

1

TRUE ENOUGH, BUT A WORLD IS MORE THAN THE ROCKS AND SOIL THAT MAKE IT UP, ORION.

NEW GENESIS IS *GONE*, TO BE SURE. BUT THE *PEOPLE* SURVIVE INTACT, AND SO LONG AS THEY DO...

...SO WILL THE *SPIRIT* OF THAT NOBLE WORLD ENDURE.

PERHAPS. PERHAPS, YOUR HEART IS EVER *LIGHTER* THAN MINE, LIGHTRAY. YOUR BLOOD *SINGS* IN TRIBUTE TO EACH NEW DAY.

WHILE MY HEART PUMPS FASTER ONLY WHEN IT HEARS THE CALL OF *BATTLE*. AND THAT'S A SIREN SOUND I'VE HEARD TOO OFTEN IN MY MANY YEARS.

YOURS IS A HEAVY BURDEN, ORION.

HEAVIER BY FAR THAN ANY OF THE OTHER GODS OF NEW GENESIS.

IT'S BECAUSE I AM NOT *NATIVE* TO THAT PLEASANT SPHERE, LIGHTRAY.

BY BIRTH I AM A CHILD OF THAT BLACK CAULDRON LOOMING NOW BEFORE US--

--THE PLANET *APOKOLIPS!*

HOME OF DEADLY *DARKSEID*. WORLD OF CRUSHING DARKNESS AND DESPAIR.

INTO THAT FIERY MAW, HIGHFATHER SENDS US ONCE AGAIN--AND THIS TIME, ON A MISSION WHICH *TRANSCENDS* ALL OTHERS!

TO SAVE A FALLEN HERO!

2

SUPERMAN vs. THE NEW GODS!

THE CHAMPION!

MORE! MORE PRESSURE! MORE! MORE! MORE!!

G-GRANNY! N-NO! PLEASE! MY BACK WILL BREAK!!

JOHN BYRNE – Storyteller
DICK GIORDANO – Embellisher
JOHN COSTANZA – letterer
TOM ZIUKO – colorist
ANDREW HELFER – Editor

3

DO YOU *WHINE*, SAVIOR? DO YOU *SNIVEL*? YOU *DISAPPOINT* GRANNY.

GRANNY HAS *TOLD* YOU THAT YOU WILL *SURVIVE* THIS TESTING.

DO YOU NOT *TRUST* GRANNY?

I...TRUST... YOU.

BUT...THE *PRESSURE*...

THE PRESSURE IS NO MORE THAN YOU CAN *BEAR*, MY PRECIOUS ONE. GRANNY WOULD NOT *HURT* HER FAVORITE STUDENT.

AND YOU *ARE* GRANNY'S FAVORITE, SAVIOR. YOU *ARE* THE ONE WHO WILL SHINE AS THE *PINNACLE* OF GRANNY'S WORK!

FOR YOU ARE *MORE* THAN JUST A RUFFIAN TAKEN FROM THE *MOBS* OF ARMAGETTO. YOU ARE THE *SON OF DARKSEID!* NEVER FORGET THAT!

NOW--*MORE PRESSURE!!*

IS...THIS *WISE*, MY LORD?

THE *AMNESIA* THAT PUT *SUPERMAN* IN OUR POWER ALSO ROBS HIM OF HIS *STRENGTH*.

AND *GRANNY GOODNESS* WILL *RESTORE* IT.

OR DOES *AMAZING GRACE* QUESTION HER MASTER?

4

N-NO, GREAT *DARKSEID!*

NEVER!

NEVER!

PATHETIC CREATURE. YOUR CRINGING MANNER REMINDS ME OF YOUR BROTHER, *GLORIOUS GODFREY.*

A PITY THAT YOU DO NOT ALSO SHARE THE FULL EXTENT OF HIS *MANIPULATING POWERS.*

M-MY MASTER IS *DISSATISFIED* WITH MY WORK?

NO. YOU HAVE DONE WELL IN YOUR PART IN THIS, GIVEN THE *HASTE* WITH WHICH THE PLAN WAS *MODIFIED.*

FOR SEVERAL DAYS NOW I HAVE *TASKED* THE HEROES OF THE PLANET *EARTH.*

I HAVE *TARNISHED* THEIR GOLDEN, GLOWING *LEGENDS.* YOUR BROTHER, WITH HIS POWER TO SHAPE THE THOUGHTS OF HUMANS, HAS *AIDED* ME IN THIS.

WHEN I BROUGHT SUPERMAN TO *APOKOLIPS*, IT WAS TO TEST HIS VAUNTED METTLE.

BUT HE ARRIVED IN *HUMAN GUISE*--AND SO, BECAUSE I WAS THEN *OBSERVED* BY THE GADFLY *PHANTOM STRANGER*, I PRETENDED NOT TO KNOW SUPERMAN FOR WHAT HE WAS.

5

INSTEAD, I SEIZED THE OPPORTUNITY TO *TEST* THE PHANTOM STRANGER'S AVOWED *NEUTRALITY* IN THIS GAME OF THE GODS.

I *HURLED* THE DISGUISED SUPERMAN FROM THE FORTRESS TOWER...

...OUT INTO THE SWARMING MASSES OF MY *HUNGER DOGS.*

AND WHILE WE WANDERED THROUGH THE DARK ALLEYS OF *ARMAGETTO*, YOUR SHOCK TROOPS SEIZED ME FROM MY "*HIDDEN*" HEADQUARTERS.

YOUR PLAN WAS TO *LURE* SUPERMAN INTO THE OPEN BY FORCING HIM TO RESCUE ME. BUT I CONFESS, GREAT DARKSEID, I FEARED YOUR PLANS HAD CHANGED TO INCLUDE MY *DEATH!*

HOW *UNTRUSTING* YOU ARE, CHILD. I SET YOU IN THE MIDST OF THE "*LOWLIES*" TO STIR THEIR HEARTS AND RAISE THEIR SPIRITS.

SO THAT, AT THE PROPER TIME, THEY COULD BE *CRUSHED* AS A REMINDER OF MY *POWER.*

AND YOU SAW *SUPERMAN* AS YET ANOTHER ELEMENT YOU COULD *SEED* INTO THIS SCHEME.

QUITE SO. ESPECIALLY AFTER A *PLUNGE* INTO THE RAGING *FIRE-PITS* ROBBED HIM OF HIS *MEMORY*--

--AND, CURIOUSLY, HIS *SUPERHUMAN POWERS!*

EVEN WITHOUT THOSE POWERS, HE WAS A NOBLE HEART, O DARKSEID.

THE BRIEF REBELLION HE LED SMASHED THROUGH YOUR GUARDS LIKE THEY WERE NAUGHT BUT *RAG DOLLS!*

6

ONLY BECAUSE I *ALLOWED* THEM TO DO SO.

YOU SPEAK *STRANGELY*, WOMAN. HAS THIS HANDSOME STRANGER FOUND A SOFT SPOT IN YOUR HEART?

N-N-NO! NO, GREAT DARKSEID! MY HEART AND SOUL EVER BELONG TO *YOU!*

BE SURE YOU *REMEMBER* THAT.

YES, SENTRY? WHAT IS YOUR REPORT?

HE--HE SENSED MY PRESENCE EVEN BEFORE I ENTERED! GREAT IS THE POWER OF DARKSEID!

MY LORD, *ORION* AND *LIGHTRAY* HAVE BEEN SIGHTED IN THE SKIES ABOVE APOKOLIPS!

ORION...YES. HIS COMING WAS NOT *UN-ANTICIPATED.*

MEDDLING *HIGHFATHER* WILL DOUBTLESS HAVE LEARNED OF SUPERMAN'S PLIGHT.

PREPARE THE GUARD!

AT ONCE, MY LORD!

THE TIME HAS COME FOR YOU TO *SURRENDER* YOUR CHARGE TO ME, GRANNY.

BUT...BUT HE IS NOT PROPERLY *PREPARED*, GREAT DARKSEID. I NEED MORE *TIME* WITH HIM.

TIME IS SOMETHING EVEN WE *GODS* DO NOT POSSESS IN GREAT ABUNDANCE, GRANNY.

ARE YOU READY TO *FIGHT* FOR ME, SAVIOR?

ALWAYS, FATHER.

MY POOR POWER IS YOURS TO COMMAND!

7

"POOR" POWER? YOUR POWER IS NOT "POOR," SAVIOR. NO SCION OF DARKSEID IS EVER "POOR."

YOURS IS THE *GREATEST* POWER ON ALL APOKOLIPS. YOUR STRENGTH IS EXCEEDED ONLY BY MY OWN.

YOU CAN SHED THE PUNY BONDS OF GRAVITY. YOU CAN RESIST ALL INJURY.

THE POWER FLOWS FROM *ME* TO *YOU*. YOU ARE THE *SON OF DARKSEID*.

YOU ARE *INVINCIBLE!!*

YES... YES!!

I *FEEL* THE POWER. I *FEEL* THE STRENGTH.

IT *SINGS* IN MY SINEWS!

POWER SUCH AS NO MAN HAS EVER KNOWN!

I AM RENEWED! I AM *REBORN!!!*

THEN GO, SAVIOR.

YOUR ENEMIES ARE *WAITING*, IN THE SKIES ABOVE OUR WORLD.

SMITE THEM! *DESTROY* THEM!

YES!

YES!!

FOR THE *GLORY* OF DARKSEID...

NOW STRIKES THE SAVIOR!!

8

GREAT DARKSEID-- I AM *CONFUSED*. FOR MANY HOURS I HAVE LABORED TO RESTORE SUPERMAN'S POWERS.

NOW YOU RETURN THEM WITH A *GLANCE*. WHY DID YOU NOT DO SO BEFORE?

I WAITED NOT WITHOUT GOOD REASON, GRANNY.

WHAT I HAVE DONE IS *DANGEROUS*.

SUPERMAN'S POWERS REQUIRE HIS FULL, ACTIVE BRAIN TO *DRIVE* THEM. AND WITH HIS MIND CLOUDED BY AMNESIA...

...HE WAS LIKE A POWERFUL VEHICLE OF WAR, CAPABLE OF *SMASHING* A CITY, BUT USELESS WITHOUT A SKILLED *OPERATOR* AT THE CONTROLS.

NOW I HAVE CREATED IN HIS MIND THE *ILLUSION* THAT HIS POWERS COME FROM *ME*. THAT ALL HE DOES, HE DOES BECAUSE HE IS THE SON OF DARKSEID.

AND THIS COULD PROVE OUR *UNDOING*. FOR, AS YOU WELL KNOW...

"...IT IS THE *TRUE* SON OF DARKSEID WHO WAITS NOW IN THE SKY ABOVE US..."

ORION, LOOK! A FLYING FIGURE HURTLES TOWARDS US. IS IT ONE OF DARKSEID'S *PARA-DEMONS*?

=UNFGH!!=

I THINK NOT, LIGHTRAY.

ORION! THAT'S *SUPERMAN!!*

THAT FACT HAS NOT *ESCAPED* ME, LIGHTRAY.

USE YOUR POWERS TO DRAW HIS *ATTENTION*...

QUICKLY!

AT ONCE, ORION!

WHAT...?!? *LIGHT TRAILS,* FLASHING ALL ABOUT ME...

UNGH!!

A PHENOMENON WELL-KNOWN AND LOVED ON NEW GENESIS, SUPERMAN.

10

AND ONE WHICH AFFORDS ME THE CHANCE TO *RECOVER* FROM YOUR SUDDEN ONSLAUGHT.

NOW, FALL BACK, LIGHTRAY! IF SUPERMAN HAS BEEN TURNED *AGAINST* US...

IT WILL TAKE *STRATEGIC USE* OF OUR COMBINED SKILLS TO STOP HIM... IF STOP HIM WE CAN, WITHOUT *KILLING HIM!* I SHALL STRIKE FIRST!!

I MUST NOW WIELD MY *ASTRO-FORCE* WITH *SURGICAL PRECISION!*

ITS POWER CAN *SHATTER WORLDS!*

I NEED IT NOW TO MERELY *STUN* OUR ADVERSARY.

UNGH!

ENERGY BUBBLES...

...BURSTING...

...PUMMELING ME...

...MAKING IT... HARD TO... *THINK* STRAIGHT...

...BUT... *GRANNY...* WARNED ME TO BEWARE SUCH *TRICKS,* WARRIORS.

THEY'LL AVAIL YOU *NOTHING* HERE!

HERE YOU FACE *SUPREME POWER!*

RIP

HERE YOU STAND AGAINST *THE SON OF DARKSEID!!*

"THE SON...??"

11

UNGH!!

ORION!!

STAND YOUR GROUND, LIGHTRAY!

I CLAIM MY *WARRIOR'S RIGHT* TO SINGLE COMBAT!

DO NOT INTERFERE!

BOLD WORDS, ORION! YOU SPEAK LIKE A *HERO!*

YET, HOW LITTLE *DIFFERENCE* THERE IS BETWEEN A *HERO*...

...AND A *FOOL!*

HE SPOUTS THE BLEAK PHILOSOPHIES OF DARKSEID AS IF THEY WERE HIS OWN!

HOW CRUEL A *TWIST* OF FATE THAT SUPERMAN SHOULD THINK HIMSELF DARKSEID'S WHELP, WHEN IT IS *I* WHO...

12

WAIT! 3 PERHAPS THAT IS THE *KEY!!*

DARKSEID HAS SOMEHOW *CONVINCED* THIS EARTHMAN HE IS A CHILD OF *APOKOLIPS.*

THAT MAY PLACE WITHIN MY GRASP THE MANNER BY WHICH HE MIGHT BE SHOWN THE *TRUTH!*

KHAK!

SO YOU CLAIM *KINSHIP* WITH THE BLACK LORD OF THIS ACCURSED WORLD, DO YOU?

THEN IT IS *TIME* YOU LEARNED THE FULL WEIGHT OF THAT *BURDEN* YOU SO EAGERLY ACCEPT.

TIME YOU LEARNED WHAT IT *TRULY MEANS* TO BE A *SON OF DARKSEID.!!*

ORION EXPOSES HIS *TRUE FACE* TO SUPERMAN.

THERE ARE *FEW* EVEN ON NEW GENESIS WHO'VE SEEN *THAT* GRIM VISAGE.

HE MUST BE HOPING THE *SHOCK* OF BEING CONFRONTED BY THE FACT OF DARKSEID'S *REAL SON* WILL BRING SUPERMAN BACK TO HIS...

WHAT'S THAT...??

A BATTLEFIELD!

THE BROKEN *CORPSES* OF DARKSEID'S SHOCK-TROOPERS LIE SIDE-BY-SIDE WITH THOSE OF THE HUNGER DOGS!

WHAT HAS HAPPENED HERE? DID THE *"LOWLIES"* OF ARMAGETTO RISE UP AGAINST THEIR CRUEL MASTERS?

WHO COULD HAVE *SPURRED* THEM TO SUCH *FOLLY*?

YOU LOOK *SURPRISED*, PRETTY ONE.

HAVE YOU NEVER SEEN THE FACE OF *WAR*?

WHO...??

IN THESE PARTS, I AM SOMETIMES CALLED *AMAZING GRACE*, LIGHTRAY.

YOU MAY COME TO KNOW ME BY *ANOTHER* NAME.

14

"...ANOTHER...?"

AYE, SWEET LIGHTRAY. YOU MAY COME TO CALL ME "FRIEND.."

OR BETTER STILL...

"BELOVED."

FOR AM I NOT *DESIRABLE*, LIGHTRAY?

DO YOU NOT SEE IN ME THE FACE AND FORM OF EVERY WOMAN YOU HAVE WALKED WITH IN YOUR *DREAMS*?

HER...EYES...

THEY *BURN* INTO MY BRAIN...INTO THE DARKEST RECESSES OF MY MOST HIDDEN *SOUL*.

FOR...WHAT SHE SAYS IS *TRUE!*

SURRENDER YOURSELF TO ME, LIGHTRAY. LET ME SHOW TO YOU THE *DARK BEAUTY* OF APOKOLIPS.

LET ME SET YOU *FREE*...

NO!!

AHHHGH!!

MY...EYES!

MY EYES!!!

I CAN'T *SEE*!!

YOU'VE *BLINDED* ME!!

15

ONLY A *TEMPORARY* EFFECT, TEMPTRESS. WHEN DARKSEID LEARNS OF YOUR *FAILURE* TO SEDUCE ME, *HIS* DEALINGS WITH YOU WILL DOUBTLESS BE OF A MORE *PERMANENT* KIND.

ORION! THERE HAS BEEN A GREAT *SLAUGHTER* HERE!

I KNOW, LIGHTRAY. *MOTHER BOX* HAS ALREADY OPENED SUPERMAN'S MIND TO ME. HE *LED* THE HUNGER DOGS--

--AND THEN *BETRAYED* THEM.

S-SUPERMAN-- *BETRAYED* THEM??

NOT WILLINGLY. A MOMENT, LIGHTRAY.

THE GENTLE *SOOTHINGS* OF MOTHER BOX HAVE BROUGHT A BRIEF MOMENT OF *PEACE* TO THIS HERO'S TROUBLED HEART AND MIND.

PING PING PING PING PING

PING PING PING

NOW SHE IS *REWEAVING* THE BROKEN FABRIC OF HIS *COSTUME* AND HIS *MIND*. HIS *AMNESIA* IS STRIPPED AWAY, AND WITH IT, THE LIES IMPLANTED IN HIS *MEMORY* BY...

PING PING PING PING PING

DARKSEID!!

WHAT'S THIS...?

SO... SUPERMAN, IT SEEMS, IS *FREE* OF MY TANGLED WEB.

EVEN FROM THIS *DISTANCE*, I SENSE THE *RAGE* WHICH BOILS HIS ALIEN BLOOD. HE KNOWS HOW *ILL* I'VE TREATED HIM.

MY *PLAN* HAS GONE *ASTRAY*.

PERHAPS IN THIS I *OVERREACHED* MYSELF. PERHAPS IT WAS *FOOLHARDY*, SEEKING TO INCLUDE THIS *MAN OF STEEL* IN MY SMALL SCHEME TO FURTHER *CRUSH* THE SPIRITS OF MY HUNGER DOGS.

EVEN WITH AMNESIA FOGGING HIS BRAIN, SUPERMAN'S NOBLE NATURE COULD NOT TOO LONG BE SUPPRESSED.

ESPECIALLY IF ORION SHOWED THE *TRUTH* TO MY MISGUIDED "*SAVIOR*."

NO MATTER. DARKSEID IS NOT TOO *PROUD* TO *ADMIT* AN ERROR...

...AND *CORRECT* IT!!

17

OMEGA BEAMS!!
THE ULTIMATE "WIPE-OUT!!"
DARKSEID MEANS TO ANNIHILATE US!
NOT "US", LIGHTRAY.
HE KNOWS I'M AFTER HIM, NOW.
THOSE BEAMS ARE MEANT FOR ME!
HE USED THEM TO TELEPORT ME TO APOKOLIPS IN THE FIRST PLACE...
...BUT THIS TIME...
...HE'S NOT GOING TO FIND IT...
...SO EASY...
...TO CATCH ME!
ENOUGH PLAYING TAG.
TIME TO TAKE THIS FIGHT TO DARKSEID'S OWN DOORSTEP.
18

DARKSEID!!

SUPERMAN!!

YES. AND I'VE BROUGHT YOU A LITTLE *PRESENT!*

NO!

YAHHHGH!

WELL, WELL!

STILL *WITH US*, DARKSEID? I DON'T KNOW IF I REALLY EXPECTED YOU TO *SURVIVE* THAT ONE.

OF COURSE... I *SURVIVE*... FOOL. MY BODY... COULD NOT *CONTAIN* THE OMEGA FORCE... IF IT COULD NOT... *RESIST* IT.

BUT YOU HAVE *HURT* ME, SUPERMAN.

19

PERHAPS YOU'LL *FIND* SOME SMALL *COMFORT* IN THAT FACT...

...IN YOUR GRAVE!!

THE OMEGA FORCE IS *SPENT*. IT WILL TAKE *TIME* TO RETURN TO FULL *POTENCY*.

BUT THERE ARE *OTHER THINGS* IT CAN STILL DO.

GNAHHGH!!

I CAN *ATTUNE* THE FREQUENCY OF MY ENERGY BLASTS TO YOUR PRECISE *MOLECULAR STRUCTURE*, SUPERMAN.

HERE IS *AGONY*, HERO.

HERE IS *PAIN* SUCH AS YOU HAVE NEVER *KNOWN*.

ANGUISH THAT WILL MAKE YOU *BEG*...

...*PLEAD* FOR THE SWEET RELEASE OF *DEATH*!

DARKSEID...

20

YOU TALK TOO MUCH!

UNH!

SURE, YOU *HURT* ME, DARKSEID. YOU PUT ME THROUGH A *GANTLET* LIKE I'VE NEVER KNOWN.

BUT DON'T *PREACH* AT ME ABOUT *PAIN.*

COMPARED TO AN EXPOSURE TO *KRYPTONITE,* ANYTHING YOU CAN THROW AT ME IS A *WALK IN THE PARK!!*

NOW...

LET'S *FINISH* THIS ONCE AND FOR ALL!

AYE, SUPERMAN. THIS GAME *IS* FINISHED.

EEEEEEEEEEEEE

BUT ON *MY* TERMS!!

WHAT THE...??

EEEEEEEEE

EE

BOOM!

A BOOM TUBE! YOU'VE TELEPORTED HIM ACROSS THE COSMOS!

WHERE, DARKSEID?

WHERE DID THE STAR GATE CARRY HIM?

HOME, ORION.

HE BEAT ME FAIRLY. AND THOUGH DARKSEID MAY EVER SCHEME...

...HE NEVER CHEATS.

SUPERMAN HAS WON A SAFE TRIP BACK TO EARTH.

AND WHAT OF US, FATHER? DO YOU NOW TURN YOUR POWER TO OUR DESTRUCTION?

HOW ALIKE WE ARE, ORION. AND YET, HOW UNALIKE. THE TIME IS NOT COME FOR OUR LAST BATTLE.

IF YOU CHOOSE NOT TO FIGHT TODAY, I SHALL NOT FORCE THE ISSUE.

THE TIME IS NOW FOR BINDING WOUNDS. SOON ENOUGH THE HOUR WILL TURN AGAIN TO CONFLICT.

AND SO IT ENDS, ORION? SUPERMAN IS RETURNED TO EARTH, TO CARRY FOR THE REST OF HIS DAYS THE GUILT OF HIS RESPONSIBILITY IN THE SLAUGHTER OF ALL THOSE HUNGER DOGS AND SHOCK TROOPS?

NO, LIGHTRAY.

MOTHER BOX RESTORED HIS MEMORY--BUT NOT OF THAT. IT IS NOT FITTING ONE SUCH AS SUPERMAN SHOULD BEAR SUCH GRIEF.

WHY NOT? YOU'VE BORNE WORSE. IS SUPERMAN A LESSER HERO THAN YOU?

NO. BUT IT IS MY LOT TO BEAR SUCH THINGS. I AM A WARRIOR.

SUPERMAN IS SOMETHING MORE. SOMETHING SPECIAL.

HE IS A CHAMPION.

THE End

22

DC
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
4
APR. 87
SUPERMAN®
BLOODSPORT™
...HE PLAYS FOR KEEPS!
SCHAFFER - 1986

METROPOLIS, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 23RD. 1:23 P.M.

PPY XMAS

HEMBECK

C'MON, LUCY! IT'S NOT LIKE I'M ASKING YOU TO SELL SECRETS TO THE *RUSSIANS!*

ALL I NEED IS FOR YOU TO TAKE A COUPLE OF *PICTURES* FOR ME.

HEMBECK HATES NOSH

THANK YOU

THAT'S "*ALL*", HUH? YOU SAY THAT LIKE YOU WEREN'T ASKING ME TO USE MY SECURITY CLEARANCE TO GET *INSIDE INFO* FOR YOU.

COME ON *YOURSELF, JIMMY.* YOU KNOW HOW *HARD* I WORKED TO GET THIS JOB. AND NOW YOU'RE ASKING ME TO RISK *BLOWING IT*-- WITH NO GUARANTEE?

OKAY--TRUE, I'M NOT IN ANY POSITION TO OFFER YOU PROTECTION ON BEHALF OF THE *DAILY PLANET.*

BUT YOU *KNOW* THERE'S SOMETHING SHADY GOING ON DOWN AT *INTERCONTINENTAL AIRLINES*-- AND SINCE YOU *WORK* FOR THEM...

C'MON, LUCY! THIS COULD BE A BIG *BREAK* FOR ME!

UH-HUH. HONEST TO GOD, JIM, IF WE HADN'T ALREADY BEEN DATING FOR TWO YEARS, I MIGHT THINK YOU'D BEEN JERKING ME ALONG JUST TO GET...

FOOLS!

BRAT-TAT

LUCY!!

GET DOWN!!

TAT-TAT-TAT

TAT-AT-TAT-AT-TAT-AT!

FOOLS! ANIMALS!! IS THIS WHAT WE FOUGHT FOR? IS THIS WHAT WE *DIED* FOR?

ME AN' MICKEY DIDN'T GET OUR *CANS* BLOWN OFF IN *'NAM* SO YOU COULD *WASTE AWAY* YOUR LIVES LIKE THIS!

YOU'RE ON *NOTICE*, METROPOLIS!

NO MORE SENSELESS *WASTE* OF THE FREEDOMS WE *DIED* TO PROTECT FOR YOU!

CLEAN UP YOUR ACT, BIG CITY...

...OR *BLOODSPORT* WILL DO IT FOR YOU!!

J-JIMMY...

WHAT... WHO... WHO *WAS* THAT *LUNATIC*?

I... DON'T KNOW, LUCE...

BUT I KNOW SOMEONE WHO'S GONNA WANT TO *FIND OUT!*

ZEEEEEEEEE

2

THIS BETTER NOT BE ANOTHER *FLAT TIRE, JIMMY!*

SUPERMAN'S PAL JIMMY OLSEN®

Created by JERRY SIEGEL & JOE SHUSTER

John Byrne writer/penciller | Karl Kesel inker | Anthony Tollin colorist | John Costanza letterer | Helfer Carlin editors

NO WAY, *SUPERMAN!*

I PROMISED YOU I'D NEVER USE THIS *SIGNAL WATCH* FOR ANYTHING *TRIVIAL* AGAIN--AND BELIEVE ME, THIS ISN'T *TRIVIAL!*

THERE'S A MADMAN ON THE LOOSE, SUPERMAN. A CANNON-SLINGING *LUNATIC* WHO CALLS HIMSELF...

BLOODSPORT!

BLOODSPORT? WHO'S HE?

A VERY NASTY CUSTOMER, SUPERMAN.

VERY NASTY.

POLI

CAPTAIN SAWYER. SO YOUR MAJOR CRIMES UNIT IS IN ON THIS? WHAT'S GOING ON?

EASIER IF YOU JUST TAKE A LOOK FOR YOURSELF, SUPERMAN.

RIGHT OVER THERE...

KAHN'S

OH MY GOSH!

IT'S HIM!

IT'S REALLY HIM!

THE KIDS AT SCHOOL ARE NEVER GONNA BELIEVE THIS!

WAIT'LL I TELL TH' OLD LADY!

FAULKNER'S

HEME

BECK'S

E · DO NOT CROSS

MPD

TO PROTEC AND SERVE

15

FRED SEZ

"IT'S SOY GOOD!"

4

WE ESTIMATE *TWENTY-FIVE DEAD.*

WE WON'T HAVE AN *ACCURATE* COUNT UNTIL WE'VE FINISHED LOADING THE *BODY BAGS.*

H-HOW...

HOW DID THIS *HAPPEN?!?*

WELL--ACCORDING TO THE EYEWITNESSES, INCLUDING YOUR BUDDY *OLSEN*, THIS BLOODSPORT CLOWN JUST WALTZED UP AND OPENED FIRE.

NO WARNING, NO ANNOUNCE-MENT, NO ANGRY LETTER TO THE *TIMES.*

APPARENTLY, THE ONLY *TALKING* HE DID WAS SOME RAVING ABOUT *VIET-NAM*, AND AN ORDER FOR METROPOLIS TO "*CLEAN UP YOUR ACT.*"

"*CLEAN UP...*"?

THEN THIS ISN'T LIKELY TO BE AN *ISOLATED INCIDENT.* HE'S BOUND TO *STRIKE* AGAIN--UNLESS WE *STOP HIM!*

THAT MAY NOT BE AS EASY AS IT *SOUNDS*, SUPERMAN.

I PUT OUT AN *A.P.B.** FOR THE SUPER-CYCLE HE WAS RIDING, BUT THERE'S NO WORD. IT'S LIKE HE TURNED A CORNER AND TURNED *INVISIBLE.*

TO *HUMAN* EYES, PERHAPS, CAPTAIN. BUT WITH MY *INFRA-RED VISION* I CAN FOLLOW THE RESIDUAL *HEAT IMAGE* OF BOTH BLOODSPORT *AND* HIS BIKE.

**ALL POINTS BULLETIN*

GET A *CELL* READY, *MAGGIE.*

BLOODSPORT IS AS GOOD AS CAUGHT!

5

JIMMY! WHERE ARE YOU GOING??

YOU HEARD THE MAN, LUCY.

IF SUPERMAN'S GONNA PEG BLOODSPORT, I'M GONNA BE THERE!

THIS IS ONE SUPER-SCOOP I'M NOT GONNA LOSE TO CLARK KENT OR YOUR SISTER, LOIS!

SEE YA LATER!

NHRR-R-R-RHH

OHH-H-- NOT NOW!

ARGH!

DOUBLE ARGH!!

WHAT A TIME FOR THIS STUPID CAR TO GIVE UP THE GHOST!!

OKAY, OLSEN, GET YOURSELF TOGETHER. YOU'VE STILL GOT YOUR POLICE BAND RADIO. LET'S HEAR WHAT...

...SIGHTED AT KENMOORE LANES IN QUEENSVIEW. REPEATING: A VEHICLE MATCHING THE DESCRIPTION OF BLOODSPORT'S MOTORCYCLE HAS BEEN SIGHTED AT...

BINGO!

I KNOW THAT BOWLING ALLEY! MY DAD USED TO TAKE ME THERE.

IT SHOULDN'T TAKE MORE'N TEN MINUTES TO GET THERE BY...

TAXI!!

FIVE MINUTES AGO...

YEEAH-H-H-H-HHH

BRR

AAA-AT-AT-AT-AT-TAT!

LEXCORP

KENMOORE

YOU CREEPS! YOU STUPID, CRAWLING CREEPS!

LOOK AT YOU! SOFT AND WET AND *USELESS!*

ALL OF YOU!!!

ME AN' MICKEY *BOUGHT* YOUR LIBERTY WITH OUR *LIVES!* NOW...

HUH?

TENK

OKAY, BIG MOUTH, YOU CAN LET THE LADY GO NOW, AND *DROP* THAT PEA-SHOOTER.

THEN I'LL GIVE YOU ABOUT *THREE SECONDS* TO COME UP WITH A GOOD REASON WHY I *SHOULDN'T* BOWL A FEW FRAMES WITH YOUR *HEAD.*

BRON ICK

SUPERMAN!

YEAH! *YEAH!* YOU'RE THE ONE I'VE BEEN *WAITING* FOR!

DON'T COME ANY CLOSER, FREAK-O, OR I'LL GIVE THIS BROAD A FAST *LOBOTOMY!*

7

BRAT!

AT-AT

TEP

NOW THEN, PUNK, LET'S GET YOU DOWN-TOWN TO A NICE, COZY HOLDING CELL--

--AND THEN, WITH ANY KIND OF LUCK, INTO A PSYCHIATRIC MAXIMUM SECURITY WARD FOR THE REST OF YOUR MURDEROUS LIFE!

GO CLIMB YOUR THUMB, SUPERHERO!

YOU GOT IN *ONE HIT!*

IF WE'D KNUCKLED UNDER WHEN *CHARLIE* DID THAT, YOU'D BE EATIN' *RICE CAKES* TODAY!

INSTEAD...

...YOU CAN EAT...

...*THIS!!*

WHAT IN BLAZES??

THAT WEAPON JUST... *MATERIALIZED* IN HIS HAND!

OBVIOUSLY, IT'S TIME FOR A QUICK *REASSESSMENT!* THERE'S MORE TO THIS BLOOD-SPORT CLOWN THAN MEETS THE EYE!

A NICE *TRICK*, BLOODSPORT. BUT YOU'RE WASTING YOUR TIME.

THERE'S NO HANDGUN ON EARTH THAT CAN HARM *ME*.

MAYBE THAT'S HOW IT *USED TO BE*, SUPERMAN...

BUT THIS WEAPON WAS DESIGNED AND BUILT SPECIFICALLY WITH *YOU* IN MIND.

AND IT CAN *KILL YOU!!*

AHGH!!

PHFFFT!

HA HA HA HA!

NOT SO *SNUG* NOW, EH, SUPES-BABY? NOT SO *HIGH AND MIGHTY* AFTER ALL!

KRYPTONITE! THAT THING FIRES NEEDLES OF *KRYPTONITE!*

THAT'S RIGHT, PAL. LITTLE *SLIVERS* OF ROCK FROM THE ALIEN PLANET YOU CAME FROM!

RADIOACTIVE ROCK, THAT KNOCKS OUT YOUR POWERS AND MAKES YOU JUST AS *VULNERABLE* AS ANYBODY ELSE.

SAY "GOODNIGHT, GRACIE..."

HOLD IT, CREEP!!

WHAT TH'...??

JIMMY!

DROP THE GUN, WISE-GUY, AND BACK AWAY NICE AND SLOW!

STAY *LOW*, SUPERMAN. I DON'T WANT YOU *HURT* IF I HAVE TO OPEN FIRE!

WELL, *HAW HAW!*

SO SOME FRECKLE-FACED *BOY* THINKS HE CAN *TAKE* ME?

I USED TO *EAT* TWERPS LIKE YOU FOR *BREAK-FAST* IN 'NAM.

I'LL BET YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW TO *USE* THAT CANNON.

MAYBE NOT.

BUT I'M BETTING ALL I HAVE TO DO IS *PULL THE TRIGGER*. I FIGURE WITH THE KIND OF FIRE-POWER THIS CAP-GUN PUTS OUT, I SHOULDN'T HAVE TO WORRY TOO MUCH ABOUT MY *AIM*.

AT THIS DISTANCE, HOW CAN I *MISS*? SO--YOUR CALL, BLOODSPORT. DROP IT, OR I DROP *YOU*.

OKAY, KID. DON'T GET *TWITCHY*.

I'LL DROP IT...

AND *THIS!!*

SPAK!

HAK! CHOKE!

HAK!

SUPERMAN! SUPERMAN, WHERE ARE YOU??

...J-JIMMY...

DOCTOR SANCHEZ!

HOW *IS* HE?

THAT'S HARD TO SAY, MR. OLSEN.

I'VE MANAGED TO *REMOVE* ALL THE PARTICLES OF KRYPTONITE FROM THAT SPLINTER. I COULD TELL I GOT THE LAST ONE BECAUSE HIS *INVULNERABILITY* BEGAN TO RETURN ALMOST AT ONCE. I WAS FORCED TO EXPOSE HIM TO A SMALL AMOUNT OF THE KRYPTONITE JUST TO WEAKEN HIM ENOUGH TO SUTURE THE WOUND!

BUT HE HAS NEVER EXPERIENCED THE KIND OF *PHYSICAL TRAUMA* A BULLET WOUND CAUSES. I CAN'T BEGIN TO GUESS WHAT EFFECT IT WILL ULTIMATELY HAVE ON HIS *ALIEN* PHYSI-OLOGY!

CAN I SEE HIM?

I...SUPPOSE SO.

BUT KEEP IT SHORT. HE'S STILL VERY *WEAK*.

HE LOST QUITE A BIT OF *BLOOD*, AND, OF COURSE, WE WERE NOT ABLE TO FIND A *MATCH* FOR A TRANSFUSION.

SUPERMAN...?

JIMMY!

THANKS, PAL! YOU REALLY SAVED MY BACON!

BUT...WHAT ARE YOU DOING *UP*? THE DOCTOR SAID...

I KNOW WHAT HE SAID, JIM. I *HEARD* YOU TALKING.

BUT I CAN'T JUST *LIE AROUND* WAITING TO FEEL BETTER.

NOTHING LIKE THIS EVER HAPPENED TO ME BEFORE. I HAVE NO IDEA HOW LONG IT WILL TAKE ME TO FULLY RECOVER.

MEANWHILE, BLOODSPORT IS STILL ON HIS *RAMPAGE*... AND THE FACT THAT HE HAS ACCESS TO *KRYPTONITE* CASTS THIS BUSINESS IN A WHOLE NEW LIGHT.

IT MEANS HE'S NOT ACTING *ALONE*--AND I KNOW NOW WHO'S *BEHIND* HIM!!

KIMBERLY! WHAT IN BLAZES IS GOING ON?

A NOT-UNEXPECTED *DISRUPTION* OF YOUR PLAN, *LUTHOR.*

WHAT DO YOU *MEAN*, "*NOT UNEXPECTED*"? YOU ASSURED ME THIS BLOODSPORT FELLOW COULD BE *CONTROLLED.*

I THINK YOU TOOK ME TOO *LITERALLY.* TRUE, WE WERE ABLE TO *PREPARE* AND *DIRECT* ROBERT DuBOIS...

BUT I *WARNED* YOU HIS PSYCHOLOGICAL PROFILE SUGGESTED A *DANGER ZONE.*

BY PLAYING OFF HIS VIETNAM FIXATIONS, WE RAN THE RISK OF TRIGGERING PRECISELY THE KIND OF RAMPAGE NOW OCCURRING.

YOU WARNED ME HE MIGHT PROVE *UNSTABLE*, KIMBERLY. THERE WAS NO INDICATION HE'D START SLAUGHTERING *CIVILIANS.* HE WAS SUPPOSED TO BE TARGETED SPECIFICALLY FOR *SUPERMAN!*

HE STILL IS. UNFORTUNATELY, HE CHOSE HIS OWN RATHER... *DRASTIC* METHODS OF LURING THE...AH... *MAN OF STEEL* INTO ACTION.

"*UNFORTUNATELY*"?

HOW MANY DEAD SO FAR? FORTY? *FIFTY?*

WELL, *NO MORE!!*

TERMINATE HIM. *NOW!!*

13

YAHHH!

BDAM AM AN

OKAY, BLOOD-SPORT...

THAT'S *ENOUGH!*

YOU!

COME BACK TO LET ME *FINISH* THE JOB?

MAYBE:

I'M STILL SO WEAK AND DIZZY FROM THE KRYPTONITE AND LOSS OF BLOOD...

THAT *LANDING* HAD ALL THE GRACE OF A WOUNDED DUCK!

YOU THINK YOU CAN *HANDLE* THE JOB OF FINISHING ME WITHOUT *CHEATING* THIS TIME?

OR IS IT YOUR IDEA OF A *FAIR FIGHT* TO INJECT YOUR OPPONENT WITH *PLAGUE VIRUS?*

14

SAVE THE SPEECHES, SUPERMAN.

BAM-AM AM

GNHGH!!

I DON'T NEED *KRYPTONITE* TO TAKE YOU OUT.

NOT WHEN I CAN GET...

...ANY WEAPON YOU CAN *IMAGINE!*

SHHHK SHHHK SHHHK SHHHK

BLAMM BLA BAM BLA DAM

15

SEE, SUPERMAN?

IT'S *ALL OVER* FOR YOU!

YOU'RE A *DEAD* MAN!

BLOODSPORT...

IF I HAD A *NICKEL* FOR EVERY CLOWN WHO'S TOLD ME *THAT*, I COULD BALANCE THE NATIONAL BUDGET ALL BY MYSELF.

BATTERED AND BASHED I MAY BE, BUT THAT'S A LONG WAY FROM *DEAD*.

YES?

THEN TRY *THIS!!*

KREEEEEEEE

HUH??

INCOMING!!!

OKAY, OUTLAW, YOU CAN JUST *FREEZE* RIGHT THERE!

LC171

ONE FALSE MOVE AND YOU GET BLOWN TO *KINGDOM COME*...

...COURTESY OF *LEX LUTHOR!*

LUTHOR!?

WHAT DOES THAT *DO-GOODER* WANT, STICKING HIS NOSE INTO THIS?

YOU GO BACK TO YOUR BILLIONAIRE BOSS AND TELL HIM TO MIND HIS OWN *BUSINESS*...

...UNLESS HE WANTS A FACEFUL OF *THIS!!*

NOW THAT'S INTERESTING! EVERYONE THINKS LUTHOR'S JUST AN HONEST BUSINESSMAN, BUT HE'S THE ONLY ONE ON EARTH WITH ACCESS TO *KRYPTONITE*, SO HE *MUST* BE BACKING BLOODSPORT!

BUT IT SEEMS BLOODSPORT HIMSELF DOESN'T *KNOW* THAT.

IT ALSO SEEMS LUTHOR'S DECIDED TO *CORRAL* HIS TRIGGER-HAPPY AGENT BEFORE MORE *DAMAGE* IS DONE--

--ONCE AGAIN MAKING HIMSELF LOOK THE *HERO* TO THE PEOPLE OF METROPOLIS.

WELL, HE'S DOING THE *RIGHT THING* FOR THE *WRONG REASON*, BUT I MIGHT AS WELL LEND A HAND...

HEY!!

17

DAMN!

COMIN' AT ME FROM ALL DIRECTIONS!

JUST LIKE THE *CONG!* CRAWLIN' OUT OF THE JUNGLE...

SWARMING LIKE *ANTS!*

ONLY *THIS TIME* I GOT ME A BIG CAN OF *RAID!!*

THIS TIME WE *WIN!*

BLAST!

THERE WAS NO WAY TO GET THE PASSENGERS OUT OF THAT TANK BEFORE HE TELEPORTED THAT BAZOOKA INTO...

"*TELEPORTED...*"?

WAIT A MINUTE!

THAT'S *IT!!*

THAT'S THE *ANSWER!*

18

HUH?

WHAT'S GOING...

...ON...

SUPERMAN!

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU THINK YOUR *GAME* IS...

...BUT IT'S GONNA TAKE MORE THAN *LIGHT SHOWS* TO...

WHAT...?!?!

M-MY WEAPONS?!?

WHAT'S HAPPENED TO MY WEAPONS??

I HAPPENED, BLOODSPORT. I REALIZED YOU WEREN'T *CREATING* THOSE WEAPONS, AS I FIRST THOUGHT.

YOU WERE *TELEPORTING THEM* FROM ANOTHER LOCATION.

SO I USED MY *HEAT VISION* TO *IONIZE* THE AIR AROUND YOU!

AND THAT *SCRAMBLED* YOUR TELEPORTATION GIZMO!

N-NOO!!!

THAP!

19

NOW, *STOP*, BLOODSPORT. IT'S ALL *OVER*.

YOUR WEAPONS ARE *GONE*. THERE'S NOTHING MORE YOU CAN *DO*.

SURRENDER--AND WE'LL FIND A *DOCTOR* TO HELP YOU *GET OVER* THE HELL YOU WENT THROUGH IN THAT USELESS WAR...

DON'T *PATRONIZE* ME, SUPERMAN. IT'S NOT OVER YET.

NOT WHILE I'M STILL *BREATHING*.

YOU *FORGOT* ONE THING, SUPERMAN. THE *POWER PACK* THAT OPERATES MY WEAPONS TRANSPORTER.

I'VE *PRIMED* IT, NOW. AND THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN *DO* ABOUT IT.

IT'S A *DEAD MAN'S SWITCH*, SUPERMAN.

IT'LL FIRE IF I TAKE MY HAND OFF IT.

AND THAT'S WHAT I'M GONNA *DO*, SUPERMAN.

THE *BLAST* WILL COVER ALMOST *TEN SQUARE MILES!*

YOU'LL PROBABLY SURVIVE, SUPERMAN...

BUT A BIG CHUNK OF *METROPOLIS* IS GONNA GET TURNED INTO THE BOTTOM OF A *SHAKE 'N' BAKE BAG!*

BOBBY...

20

DON'T DO IT, BOBBY.

IT REALLY *IS* ALL OVER.

THE *WAR'S* OVER.

LET IT *END*.

M-MICKEY...??

IT'S ME, BOBBY.

JIMMY OLSEN CAME AND *GOT* ME. HE TOLD ME WHAT YOU'VE BEEN DOING.

IT'S *GOT* TO *STOP*, BOBBY.

BUT--BUT THE WAR... THE WAR FOR *FREEDOM*...

THAT'S ALL *FINISHED*, BOBBY. WE *LOST* THAT ONE. AND NOW AMERICA JUST WANTS TO *FORGET*. *WE* WANT TO FORGET, BOBBY.

PLEASE-- LET IT END.

JIMMY... WHAT...?

THAT'S *MICHAEL DUBOIS*, SUPERMAN. HE'S BLOODSPORT'S YOUNGER *BROTHER*.

HE'S THE ONE WHO WENT TO VIETNAM.

NOT BLOODSPORT.

21

SOMETHING BLOODSPORT *SAID* WHEN HE FIRST SHOWED UP KEPT GOING THROUGH MY HEAD. HE SAID, "*ME AN' MICKEY DIDN'T GET OUR CANS BLOWN OFF IN 'NAM...*"

THE MORE I THOUGHT ABOUT IT, THE MORE I REALIZED BLOODSPORT DIDN'T GET *HIS* CAN BLOWN OFF *ANYWHERE!*

SO I TOOK THAT *POPGUN* I PICKED UP AT THE BOWLING ALLEY, AND HEADED OVER TO THE LOCAL *F.B.I.* OFFICES. THEY RAN A CHECK ON BLOODSPORT'S *FINGERPRINTS...*

...AND DISCOVERED THEY BELONGED TO A MAN NAMED ROBERT DUBOIS--A KNOWN *DRAFT DODGER!*

DRAFT... *DODGER...??*

YEP. WHEN HE GOT HIS *INDUCTION NOTICE,* BLOODSPORT TOOK OFF FOR *CANADA.*

AND NOT BECAUSE HE DIDN'T *BELIEVE* IN THAT WAR...

HE RAN BECAUSE HE WAS *AFRAID!*

AND HIS BROTHER?

MICKEY TOOK HIS PLACE, PASSED HIMSELF OFF AS BOBBY-- AND LOST *BOTH ARMS AND LEGS* FOR HIS TROUBLE.

BOBBY DUBOIS WENT RIGHT ROUND THE BEND WHEN HE FOUND OUT. HE'S BEEN IN AND OUT OF PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITALS ALL OVER CANADA FOR THE LAST TWELVE YEARS.

THEN, ABOUT SIX WEEKS AGO, HE JUST *DISAPPEARED.*

AND *BLOODSPORT* TURNED UP IN METROPOLIS.

AND NOW... WELL, I GUESS NOW THAT DAMN WAR IS FINALLY *OVER*-- FOR BOTH OF THEM.

Dedicated to the names on the Black Wall--and those who remember them.

22

THE ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN®

427
APR 87

by WOLFMAN and ORDWAY

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

JERRY ORDWAY

IT'S NOT THE HEAT IN THIS DRY, ARID DESERT WHICH BOTHERS HIM. IT'S HIS MISSION.

THE KNOWLEDGE THAT WHAT HE IS GOING TO DO VIOLATES HIS SENSIBILITIES.

THE ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN®

Created by JERRY SIEGEL & JOE SHUSTER

HE HAS THE STRENGTH TO RULE THIS WORLD, BUT HE HAS THE WISDOM TO NOT EVEN CONSIDER IT.

HE HAS THE POWER TO MAKE THINGS IN HIS IMAGE, BUT NOT THE EGO TO SUCCUMB TO SUCH SELFISH WHIMS.

AND YET, HE VIOLATES QURACI AIR SPACE KNOWING FULL WELL HE WILL EXERCISE HIS STRENGTH, IMPRESS UPON THEM HIS POWER, INSIST UPON HIS REASON.

STOP HIM! DESTROY HIM! DO WHAT YOU MUST--

-- SUPERMAN MUST *NOT* REACH THE CAPITOL!

BUT, OF COURSE, HE WILL.

BROUGHT TO YOU BY:

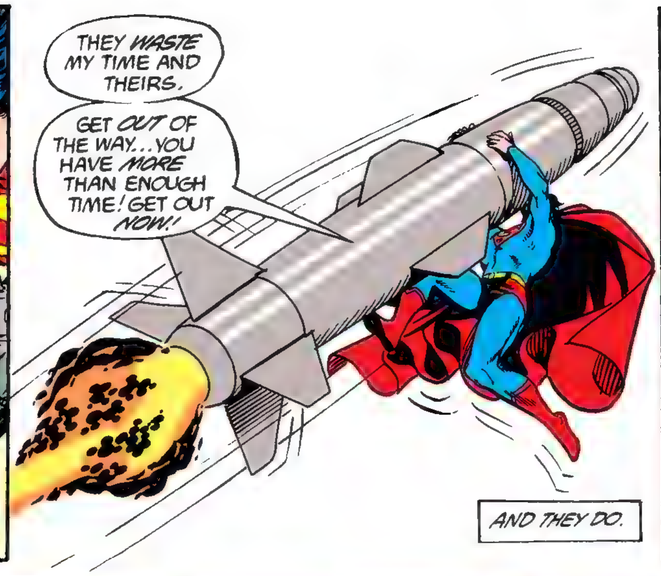
MARV WOLFMAN and JERRY ORDWAY

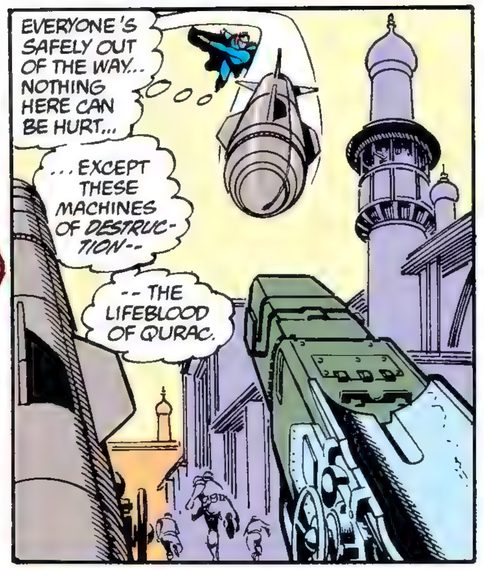
LETTERED BY: JOHN COSTANZA

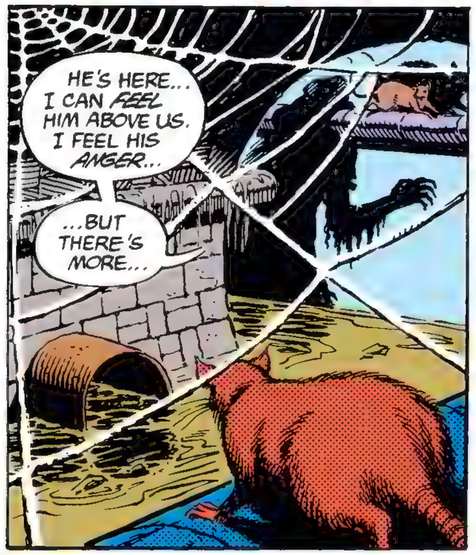
COLORED BY: TOM ZIUKO

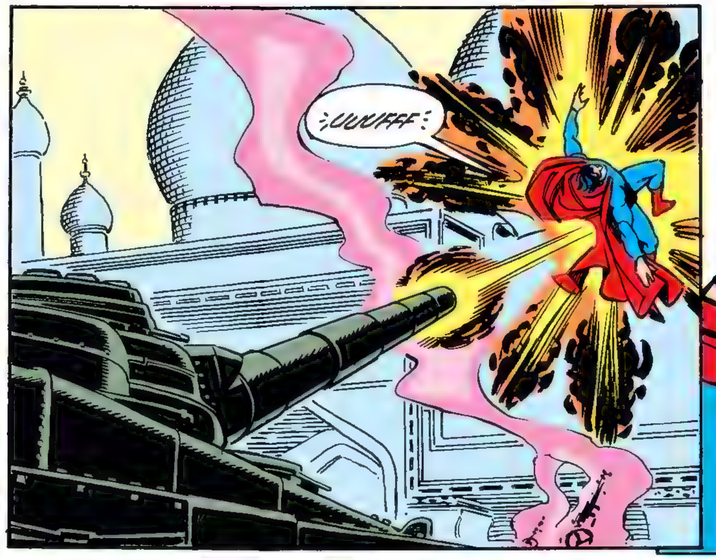
EDITED BY: ANDY HELFER & MIKE CARLIN

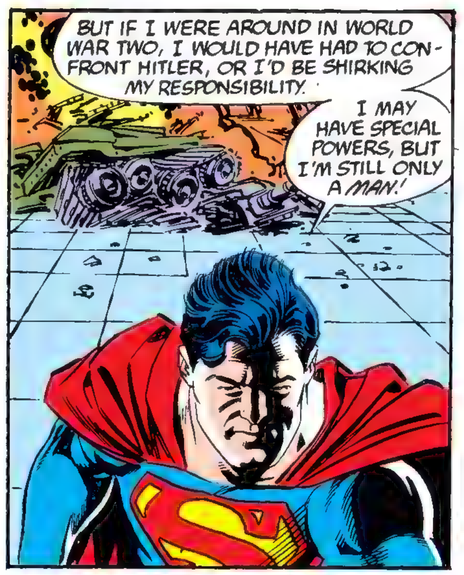
MIND GAMES

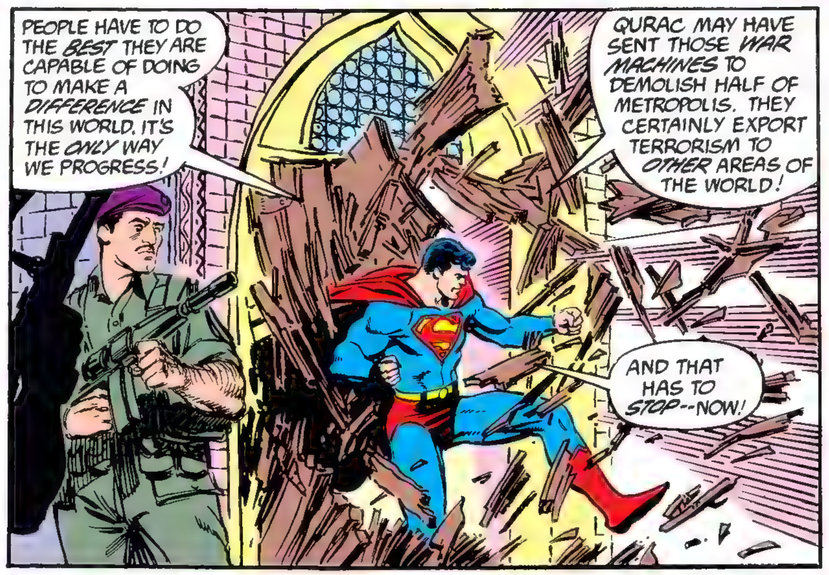












YOU'VE BEEN WARNED--DON'T COME CLOSER!
H-HE'S NOT STOPPING!
OPEN FIRE!
:TSK:
WHAT A WASTE.
STOP HIM!
DON'T LET HIM NEAR THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE!
I'M SORRY, FELLAS...
...BUT I DIDN'T FLY ALL THIS WAY TO PLAY GAMES.
SUPERMAN TO SEE PRESIDENT MARLO. I'D APPRECIATE IT NOW.
I, UHH... HE, UMMM... HE'S IN... HE... CAN'T BE DISTURBED.
EVERY TIME YOU REACH INTO HIM, YOU LOSE SOME OF YOURSELF, AND YOU TAKE SOME OF HIS PAIN.
I DON'T WANT YOU TO SUFFER LIKE THAT, PRANA. NOT EVEN FOR THE CIRCLE.
BUT IF HE IS ONE OF US, HE WILL BE OUR MOST POWERFUL MEMBER.
AND IF HE ISN'T, PRANA? MOVING INTO HIS EMOTIONS COULD KILL YOU!
4

I'M TERRIBLY SORRY, MISS, BUT I MUSTN'T BE STOPPED.

YOU DO UNDERSTAND... I'M SURE.

;OOOF!;

PRESIDENT MARLO? YOU AND I HAVE GOT TO TALK!

SOLDIER, REMOVE HIM!

Y-YES SIR.

SON...

...DON'T EVEN THINK IT.

I BELIEVE YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ATTACKS ON MY COUNTRY, ALL THE EVIDENCE POINTS TO QURAC...

...AND THUS TO YOU, MR. PRESIDENT!

NEEDLESS TO SAY, I'M NOT VERY HAPPY! CARE TO SAY SOMETHING?

OUR KIND HAS BEEN IN HIDING TOO LONG. EDEN AWAITS US AGAIN... AND TO RECLAIM IT, WE NEED ALL OF US TOGETHER.

I HAVE TO DO THIS. I HAVE TO ENTER HIS MIND... LEARN WHO SUPERMAN TRULY IS.

AND PERHAPS DIE BECAUSE OF HIM?

AND PERHAPS DIE.

5

LISTEN TO ME, SUPERMAN-- I HAD *NOTHING* TO DO WITH THE ATTACK ON METROPOLIS!

THE WEAPONS CAME FROM HERE.

PERHAPS...I'LL EVEN SAY *YES*, THOUGH I DO NOT KNOW THAT FOR A FACT.

THERE ARE *MANY* FACTIONS HERE... QURAC IS OPEN TO MANY PEOPLE. THEY DO NOT ALWAYS REPORT TO ME.

PLEASE BELIEVE ME, SUPERMAN... LET ME GO!

SUDDENLY I DON'T KNOW *WHAT* TO BELIEVE.

ALL RIGHT, MARLO.

EVEN IF YOU'RE *NOT* RESPONSIBLE, YOU KNOW WHERE EVERY NUT GROUP IS HIDING.

YOU AND I--NOT YOUR STOOGES HERE-- ARE GOING ON A LITTLE TOUR OF THIS DESERT PARADISE!

AND YOU'RE GOING TO *INTRODUCE* ME TO ALL YOUR FRIENDS WHO *MAY* BE RESPONSIBLE. AND THEN...

...THEN I'M GOING TO *SHUT DOWN* THIS TERRORIST-SAFE HAVEN FOR GOOD!

YOU'VE EVEN BEEN FOOLISH ENOUGH TO EXPORT TERROR BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN...

...SO DON'T EXPECT THEM TO FEEL ANY *SYMPATHY!*

IT'S OVER, MARLO--IT'S TOTALLY--

WHAT?

:UNNNHHHH:

PRANA... *PRANA*...

TOO LATE... THEIR MINDS ARE *ONE*.

PLEASE, MY HUSBAND... PLEASE *LIVE*... PLEASE LIVE...

6

DO SOMETHING WHILE HE'S DOWN! *SHOOT* HIM! *KILL HIM!*

DON'T LET HIM GET UP!

"HIS MIND IS SO **STRONG** ...IT PUSHES ME AWAY. HARD TO FIGHT MY WAY INSIDE...

"...NOTHING LIKE ANYTHING I HAVE FELT BEFORE... SO VERY POWERFUL! I GIVE UP MYSELF...MY THOUGHTS...MY BODY,..MY **BEING**... HURTS... PAIN...

"SO MANY THOUGHTS...SO MANY **VISIONS**--LIKE NOTHING I HAVE EVER SEEN BEFORE!

"I STRUGGLE THROUGH THE WALLS.

"I AM *INSIDE!*"

WHERE AM I?

FEEL SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT NOW...HEAVIER... GRAVITY IS FORCING ME DOWN LIKE I'VE GOT LEAD WEIGHTS TIED TO MY LEGS.

MY SON?

OUR SON. NO GESTATION CHAMBER. HE *IS* OURS, LARA.

FORMED FROM OUR BEING... SHARED BY OUR DENIED *LOVE*.

OUR BLOOD... OUR PROGENY. OUR *LOVE*--NOT SPIRITUAL, BUT FLESH AND BLOOD.

7

HE WILL *RULE* THEM. HE WILL SHAPE THEM TO PROPER KRYPTONIAN WAYS.

"*HE WAS MEANT TO RULE, THEN? PERHAPS HE IS OUR ANCESTOR-- PERHAPS HE WAS THE MISSING ONE OF LEGEND...THE FIRST OF THE CIRCLE.*"

A PLANET OF *SAVAGES* MAY WELL BE *IDEAL* FOR OUR SON TO *RULE*. AND HE *WILL* RULE! HIS POWERS WILL FORCE HIM TO RULE!

HOW ELSE *SHOULD* HE USE HIS ABILITIES, BUT TO SHOW THE BARBARIANS HOW *WRONG* THEY ARE AND HOW *RIGHT* HE IS.

YES, MY SON-- THERE IS NEED TO *NURTURE* THE HUMANS' EVOLUTION...YOU CANNOT RAISE BARBARIANS MUCH BEYOND THE *APES* THEY CAME FROM.

CONQUER THEM AS IS YOUR BIRTHRIGHT!

RULE THEM AS IS FITTING A SUPERMAN!

"*MY WORDS...THROUGH HER... IF HE IS ONE OF US HE WILL TAKE THEM, EMBRACE THEM.*"

NOOOO!

"*WHAT? RESISTANCE? IT CAN'T BE!*"

PRANA... *PRANA*... CAN YOU HEAR ME? MOVE OUT OF HIM, COME BACK TO ME... *PRANA*?

RESISTANCE... IMPOSSIBLY STRONG... HURTS... PART OF ME GONE... *HURTS* SO MUCH...

HOLD ME... PLEASE *HOLD* ME...

YOU'LL LEAVE HIM... *FORGET* HIM... YOUR LIFE ISN'T WORTH THIS. COME BACK WITH ME...

THE CIRCLE WILL UNDERSTAND!

NO... MUST... MUST GO BACK... *MUST GO BACK...*

I'M NOT A GOD-- I'M NOT GOING TO RULE. THEY'RE PEOPLE, JUST LIKE *WE* ARE. PEOPLE--EVEN *BETTER* THAN WE!

THEY HAVE *EMOTIONS*... THEY'RE *ALIVE*. I'VE GOT *MORE* TO LEARN FROM THEM THAN THEY CAN FROM ALL OF KRYPTON'S SO-CALLED PROGRESS!

YOU'RE WRONG-- YOU'RE SUPERIOR. YOU ARE NOT EVEN HUMAN!

YOU ARE ONE OF *US*, CHILD! YOU *BELONG* TO US, NOT THEM!

NO! I'M HUMAN! I'M A *MAN*! I'M NOT SOME HEARTLESS *BEAST*! I CARE! I--

--FOR GOD'S SAKE--I *LOVE*!

MY WIFE IS RIGHT-- YOU *ARE* THE FIRST OF OUR KIND! LISTEN TO ME... *BELIEVE* IN ME...

WE ARE THE *PRECURSORS* OF HUMANITY! WE *ARE* THEIR SUPERIORS! WE WERE FIRST! WE *MUST* PREVAIL!

JOIN US AGAIN... COME BACK TO YOUR PEOPLE ...HELP US *TO RULE AS WE WERE DESTINED TO RULE!*

NOOOO!!

TO *HELL* WITH YOU, THEN! IF YOU ARE *NOT* ONE OF US, WHO ARE YOU? *WHY* ARE YOU? YOU HAVE OUR POWERS--

WHY DO YOU USE THEM FOR HUMANITY? WHY DON'T YOU USE YOUR POWERS TO RULE AS WE WOULD?

WHY? WHY? WHY?

BECAUSE...BECAUSE I'M *NOT* ONE OF YOU... BECAUSE WE MUST *ALL* HELP EACH OTHER... WE ARE *NOT* ALONE... WE CAN'T BE ALONE...

WH-WHERE...? WHAT HAPPENED...

...TO ME?

YOU WERE PART OF HIM... AND HE WAS PART OF YOU. YOU BECAME EACH OTHER. AND *YOU* WERE THE ONE HURT.

END THIS NOW, PRANA. FOR ME!

END THIS... IT'S ENDED? OVER? WHAT HAPPENED?

STILL HEAR SOME VOICES... INSIDE ME? NOT IN ENGLISH... IN NO LANGUAGE I UNDERSTAND...

...BUT I DO...

I... DO... DO WISH I COULD STOP... DO WISH THIS WOULD GO AWAY... BUT HIS MIND -- YOU SHOULD BE INSIDE THAT MIND.

HE'S *NOT* ONE OF US... HE'S SOMETHING ELSE, MAYBE EVEN SOMETHING MORE!

THERE IS OVERWHELMING *PEACE* INSIDE HIM! NO TURMOIL, NO HATE, NO ANXIETY, NO JUDGMENTS OVER OTHERS!

OTHERS... RUN... DON'T CARE NOW... NEED TO REST... SO SLEEPY.

WH-WHAT HAPPENED? WH-WHAT HAPPENED? WAS IT ALL IN MY...

...MIND... HIS MIND IS SOMETHING... *WONDERFUL.*

I... I MUST GO INSIDE AGAIN!

I... I DON'T UNDERSTAND... WHAT HIT ME. I-- I WAS ON KRYPTON! I SAW MY *NATURAL PARENTS*...

...BUT THEY *COULDN'T* BE AS COLDHEARTED AS THEY SEEMED! COULD THEY?

DESPITE ALL MY POWER... I CAN'T THINK OF MYSELF AS A GOD! THEY COULDN'T *WANT* ME TO BE ONE!

I CAN'T HAVE BEEN SENT TO EARTH TO *RULE* IT!

WHAT IN HEAVEN *HAPPENED* TO ME? WHAT *REALLY* HAPPENED?

THERE'S MY HOTEL UP AHEAD-- THANK GOODNESS THE DAILY PLANET BOOKED A ROOM FOR MY OTHER IDENTITY, CLARK KENT.

HAVE TO MAKE TIME TO FILE MY STORY ON MARLO'S MAN O' WAR.

SO TIRED... MY HEAD FEELS LIKE *LIGHTNING* IS EXPLODING INSIDE!

WE NEED TO KNOW THE *EXTENT* OF HIS POWERS. THERE-- I... I'VE *CONNECTED* WITH HIM AGAIN.

HIS MIND IS *MINE*!

... AND MINE... HIS!

STILL... TIRED... COULDN'T HAVE SLEPT *THAT* LONG--

SUPERMAN...

WE'RE HERE FOR *YOU!*

UHNNH?

FOR A *LONG* TIME, SUPERMAN, I'VE QUESTIONED YOUR *ALTRUISM.*

NOBODY COULD BE THAT UNSELFISHLY *GOOD*, WITHOUT AN *ULTERIOR MOTIVE!*

YEAH, CRUD-- *WHAT IS IT?* WHAT'S YOUR *REAL* GAME?

RAGGHHHHHH!!

WE WANT *ANSWERS*, SUPERMAN! AND SYNAPSE IS PREPARED TO GET THEM!

WHAT ARE YOU *REALLY* UP TO, SUPERMAN? YOU'RE SETTING EVERYONE UP, AREN'T YOU? MAKING THEM *DEPENDENT* ON YOU!

THEN YOU INTEND TO *TAKE OVER*, DON'T YOU?

ADMIT IT, SUPERMAN, YOU'RE JUST LIKE US-- YOU WANT TO *CONTROL* THE FOOLS OUT THERE!

ADMIT IT!

I'LL *BURN* THE TRUTH OUT OF YOU, SUPERMAN. *ADMIT IT!*

N-NO... *NO!* I... I DON'T WANT ANYTHING... ANYTHING BUT TO *HELP.*

THAT'S ALL I'M DOING!

12

BAH! YOU FAILED, SYNAPSE. LET *METALLO* HAVE HIS TURN!

THAT STINKING *ROBOT*? HE'LL NEVER GET TO THE TRUTH!

DON'T BELIEVE IT, SYNAPSE!

INSIDE ME LIES A HEART MADE OF *KRYPTONITE*-- THE ONE SUBSTANCE WHICH CAN *DESTROY* THIS CONTEMPTIBLE FOOL!

HE'LL TELL ME WHY HE'S HERE ...HE'LL *EXPLAIN* HIS REAL PLAN. WE'LL DISCOVER THE TRUTH--

--OR, BY GOD, I SWEAR HE WILL *DIE*!

I HAVE, BLAST YOU! I--I'VE *TOLD* YOU THE TRUTH... I WANT...TO *HELP*... THAT'S *ALL* I WANT...

NOBODY WITH YOUR POWER WOULD USE IT FOR ANYTHING OTHER THAN FURTHERING THEIR OWN ENDS!

NOBODY IS THAT UNSELFISH. NOBODY IS THAT *INSANE*!

YOU HAVE ANOTHER PURPOSE HERE, AND WE WILL *LEARN* WHAT IT IS.

THAT'S WHERE YOU'RE *WRONG*, LUTHOR! NOT EVERYBODY IS LIKE YOU...

...NOT EVERYONE SEES THE WORLD AS A PLACE THEY CAN CORRUPT INTO SOME PERSONAL NIGHTMARISH VISION!

THERE ARE *MILLIONS* LIKE ME, LUTHOR... MILLIONS WHO *BELIEVE* IN THIS WORLD... BELIEVE IN ITS *PEOPLE*!

13

WHY DO YOU ASSUME EVERYONE IS AS *TWISTED* AS YOU?

ARE YOU SO FAR GONE YOU CAN'T SEE *HONESTY* IN ANY FORM?

MY GOD, LUTHOR, IF THAT'S TRUE, I *PITY* YOU!

WHAT IS IT LIKE, LUTHOR, NEVER BEING ABLE TO TRUST?

NEVER BEING ABLE TO KNOW OTHER PEOPLE ARE THERE FOR YOU?

GET AWAY! LEAVE ME ALONE!

I'M NOT LIKE YOU, LUTHOR--

HURTS... HURTS SO MUCH... HE'S TOO STRONG. MY HEAD-- *MY HEAD IS EXPLODING!*

STOP THIS... PLEASE *STOP*-- YOU'LL *DIE* IF YOU DON'T!

NOBODY'S LIKE YOU, LUTHOR. YOU'RE *ALONE* IN THIS WORLD!

THE CIRCLE ISN'T WORTH IT. I DON'T WANT TO *LOSE* YOU!

N-NOT DOING THIS FOR THE CIRCLE... FOR ME ... ME AGAINST SUPERMAN... *FOR ME!!*

YOUR KIND IS *ALWAYS ALONE!*

NOOOOOOO!!

14

NOOOOOO!

THIS STOPS NOW.

NO! I--I HAVE TO CONTINUE... YOU HAVE TO *HELP* ME...CAN'T STOP...NO MATTER WHAT.

NEVER...BEEN IN A MIND... LIKE HIS...HE HAS TO BE... ONE OF US. *HAS* TO BE...

MUST BE MORE...TO HIM...THAN HE'S LETTING US SEE. WE HAVE TO BREAK HIM, YOU AND I.

DON'T MAKE ME... IF YOU ENTER HIS MIND AGAIN...IT WILL *KILL* YOU!

YOU'LL DO IT... DO IT BECAUSE YOU *LOVE* ME.

SWEAR TO ME YOU WILL.

I...I WILL...

GOD HELP ME, BUT I WILL!

BUT, IF YOU *DIE* BECAUSE OF HIM --

--I *SWEAR* THAT EARTHMAN WILL *SUFFER* FOR THIS DAY!

I LOVE YOU. I *ALWAYS* WILL!

15

LUTHOR-- *LUTHOR?* *SYNAPSE? METALLO?* WHAT HAVE I--

M-MY GOD!

N-NONE OF IT HAPPENED... NONE OF IT?

WHAT'S GOING ON WITH ME? IS THERE *KRYPTONITE* IN THE AREA? IS LUTHOR USING THAT AGAINST ME?

WHAT IS GOING ON?

I NEED A HOT SHOWER... NEED SOMETHING TO HELP ME *RELAX.*

I NEED SOME TIME TO *THINK.*

MAYBE I SHOULD JUST FLY AWAY, GO BACK *HOME*... SEE IF *LOIS* IS DOING ANYTHING? OR CAT?

NO... MAYBE I'LL FLY BACK TO *SMALLVILLE.*

I THINK I NEED TO BE *HOME.*

TO BE *LOVED.*

TO BE...

IF YOU DIE...

UHNN--

NO... NOT AGAIN...

...SO WILL SUPERMAN!

WHAT?

WHERE AM I? NO... OBVIOUSLY I'M IN JAPAN!

BUT *HOW*? HOW DID I GET HERE? *LUTHOR*? ARE YOU DOING THIS TO ME? *LUTHOR*?

NO... IT CAN'T BE HIM... EVEN LUTHOR'S NOT CAPABLE OF DOING THIS!

BUT IF NOT LUTHOR--*WHO*?

"*WHY ARE YOU HERE, SUPERMAN? WHO ARE YOU? WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN THIS WORLD?*"

I DON'T *CARE* WHAT'S GOING ON ANYMORE. IF THIS IS *REAL*, THEN I HAVE TO *STOP* IT. IF IT'S NOT, NONE OF THIS MATTERS!

I ONLY WANT TO KNOW *WHO'S* BEHIND THIS? WHY ARE THEY AFTER ME? *HOW* ARE THEY DOING THIS?

"YOU WON'T FIND OUT, SUPERMAN, NOT UNTIL WE WISH IT!"

THEN SOMEONE *IS* BEHIND IT.

THAT ALONE GIVES ME ENOUGH STRENGTH TO GO ON!

IT MEANS I'M NOT CRAZY.

BUT THERE IS ONE THING I *AM*--

--AND THAT'S *MAD!*

GINZA

I DON'T LIKE BEING *MANIPULATED!*

AND I WON'T ACCEPT SOME CRAZED MADMAN SITTING SOMEWHERE PLAYING *GAMES* WITH ME!

IT'S *OVER.*

IT'S *OVER!*

I... I... CAN'T... BREAK... THROUGH...

HE'S... WHAT... HE SAYS... HE... *UNHHHHH*

THE VEIL, ZAHARA. PLEASE -- REMOVE IT!

I WISH TO GAZE UPON YOUR FACE ONE FINAL TIME...

AHH... MY LOVE... I SHALL MISS YOU DEARLY... BUT YOUR BEAUTY WARMS THE DYING EMBERS OF MY SOUL...

HE WILL PAY, MY HUSBAND. HE WILL *SUFFER... HE WILL SUFFER!*

I SWEAR IT!

I SWEAR IT.

THE *ENERGY* IS STILL WITHIN YOU. ENERGY I CAN *TAP.*

YOUR POWERS AND *MINE...*

...WE WILL COMBINE--

--WE WILL BE ONE!

"IT IS NOT OVER, SUPERMAN.

"NOT NEARLY!"

WHAT NOW? HAVEN'T YOU LEARNED I'M READY FOR *ANYTHING* YOU SEND OUT AGAINST ME?

SUPERMAN? I CAN BARELY *SEE* YOU THROUGH THE FOG!

THAT VOICE?

LANA?

I'VE BEEN LOOKING EVERYWHERE FOR YOU, CLARK! THEY SAID YOU WERE HERE. WE *ALL* CAME.

ALL?

LANA TOLD ME THE *TRUTH*... WHY DIDN'T YOU LET ME KNOW YOU'RE CLARK KENT?

DON'T YOU KNOW HOW MUCH TIME WE'VE ALREADY WASTED?

LOIS, TOO?

IS IT TRUE, SUPERMAN? YOU'RE CLARK? I *LOVE* HIM. I WANTED A *REAL* MAN, NOT SOME *ALIEN*.

YOU'RE NOT EVEN *HUMAN*. YOU'RE A *FREAK*--A *MUTANT*!

YOU LIED TO *ALL* OF US, SUPERMAN!

YOU MADE ME TOUCH A *GOD* I COULD NEVER *HAVE*.

NO... NO...

YOU PRETENDED YOU WERE HUMAN.

YOU MADE A *FOOL* OUT OF ME.

YOU MADE ME *LOVE* YOU--AND THEN YOU *LEFT* ME!

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I DIDN'T... LANA, I NEVER PRETENDED TO LOVE YOU.

LOIS, PLEASE--UNDERSTAND. MY GOD, CATHERINE--I AM *HUMAN*... YOU'VE GOT TO BELIEVE THAT.

WHAT *ARE* YOU, SUPERMAN? YOU ARE A *MUTANT*... A MUTANT LIKE US!

I AM HUMAN... I AM HUMAN!

WHY DO YOU LIE?

WHY DO YOU HELP PEOPLE? WHAT ARE YOU REALLY PLANNING?

YOU *MUST* BE ONE OF US. YOU *MUST* BE!

BUT THAT NO LONGER MATTERS. YOU *KILLED* MY MATE!

NOW I SHALL DRAW THE *ENERGY* FROM WITHIN YOU.

YOU WILL *DIE* FOR WHAT YOU'VE DONE, SUPERMAN. YOU WILL *SUFFER*!

NO... YOU'RE NOT WHO YOU PRETEND TO BE... YOU'RE AN *EVIL*.

YOU'RE AN *ALIEN*!

I CAN FIGHT BACK... I CAN *STOP* YOU... I *CAN*!

A *MUTANT*!

UN-HUMAN!

I *AM HUMAN*! WHATEVER YOU ARE, I'M NOT ONE OF YOU!

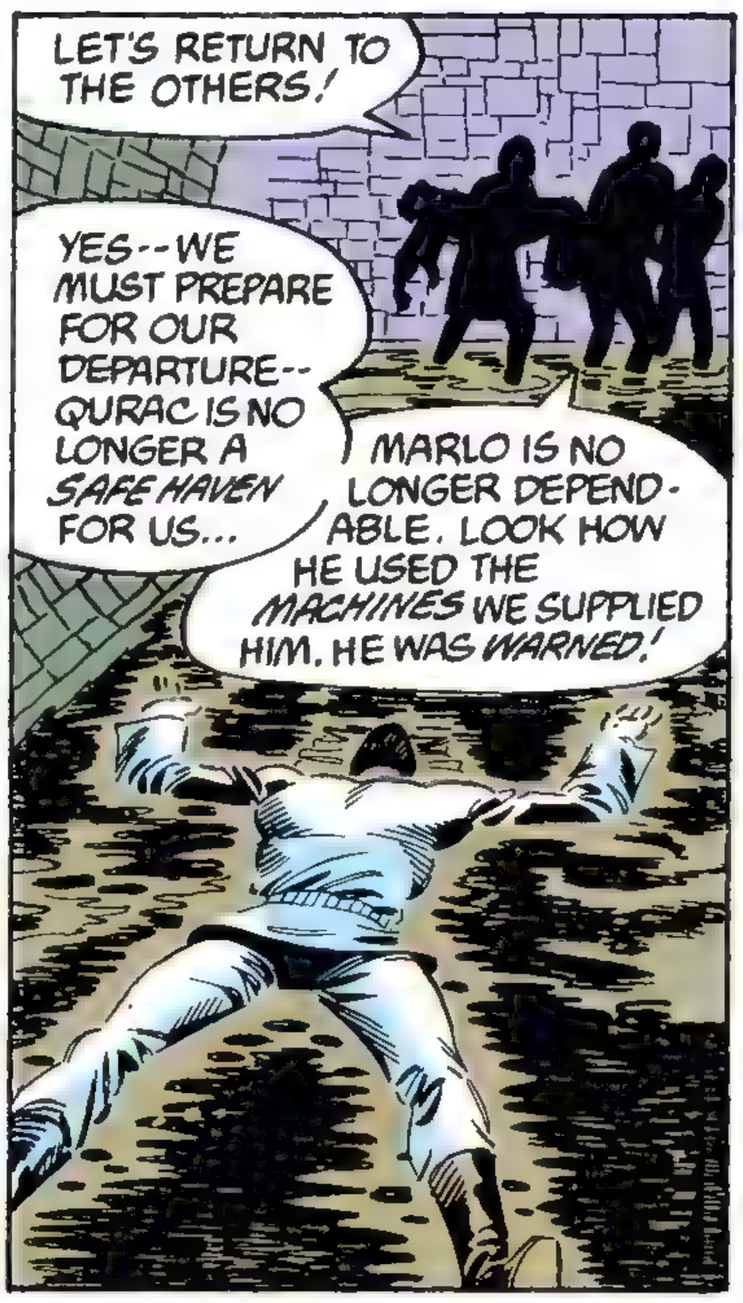
I FIGHT FOR TRUTH, NOT LIES. I FIGHT FOR JUSTICE, NOT EVIL!

I STAND FOR WHAT'S *RIGHT*! I BELIEVE IN WHAT'S RIGHT! NOTHING ELSE... *NOTHING ELSE MATTERS*!

ARRGGGGGGG

THERE SHE IS!
PRANA'S DEAD. SHE STILL LIVES!
AND SHE *FAILED*, AND HE FAILED!

WITHOUT AN ANSWER-- IS SUPERMAN ONE OF US?
STILL TO BE DETERMINED!


LET'S RETURN TO THE OTHERS!
YES--WE MUST PREPARE FOR OUR DEPARTURE-- QURAC IS NO LONGER A *SAFE HAVEN* FOR US...
MARLO IS NO LONGER DEPENDABLE. LOOK HOW HE USED THE *MACHINES* WE SUPPLIED HIM. HE WAS *WARNED!*

"OTHERS OF THE CIRCLE HAVE ALREADY TAKEN RESIDENCE IN NEW YORK, LOS ANGELES, LONDON, PARIS AND MOSCOW! OUR GROUP WILL MOVE TO METROPOLIS TO KEEP AN EYE ON THE SUPERMAN!"

"YES, BUT WHAT OF THE SUPERMAN HIMSELF? IS HE ONE OF US? WHY DOES HE USE HIS POWERS TO AID THE HUMANS?"

"WE WILL LEARN THE TRUTH SOON ENOUGH. IF HE IS ONE OF US, HE WILL BE FORCED TO REJOIN THE CIRCLE. AND IF HE ISN'T..."

THE ADVENTURES OF
SUPERMAN®
by WOLFMAN and ORDWAY
428
MAY 87
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
JERRY ORDWAY

THE ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN®

Created by JERRY SIEGEL & JOE SHUSTER

"FOR THOSE WATCHING, THE SIGHT OF THE AMAZING MAN OF STEEL COMPLETELY DISMANTLING THE QURACI AIR FORCE WAS TRULY ASTONISHING.

"NEVER, IN ALL HIS YEARS, HAS SUPERMAN WILLINGLY USED HIS INCREDIBLE POWERS IN SUCH A FASHION, WAGING AN ALL-OUT ATTACK ON ONE COUNTRY'S BORDERS."

G-3038

PERSONAL BEST

"IT BEGAN THREE DAYS AGO, WHEN SUPERMAN FORCED HIS WAY INTO THE CAPITOL OF QURAC AND CONFRONTED THE PRESIDENT OF THAT TERRORIST NATION.

"WHAT HAPPENED IN THAT PRIVATE MEETING IS UNKNOWN, BUT SUPERMAN'S RESPONSE HAS BEEN CRYSTAL CLEAR.

"HE IS FED UP WITH TERRORISM. HE IS, TO PARAPHRASE THE FICTIONAL NEWSMAN HOWARD BEALE -- 'MAD AS HELL AND NOT GOING TO TAKE IT ANY MORE.'

"THOUGH IT TOOK HIM A MERE TWO HOURS TO TOTALLY ROUT THE QURACI AIR FORCE, THE LARGER TASK OF DESTROYING THE MIDDLE EASTERN NATION'S NAVY WAS COMPLETED BY NIGHTFALL.

"NEVER IN THE HISTORY OF MANKIND HAS ONE COUNTRY'S ARMED FORCES BEEN SO FEROCIOUSLY AND COMPLETELY DEPLETED.

"RESPONSE FROM THE REST OF THE WORLD HAS BEEN SWIFT AND POSITIVE! INDEED, EVEN SOVIET PREMIER GORBACHEV HAS PRAISED SUPERMAN'S ACTIVITIES.

"IT MUST BE REMEMBERED THAT QURACI TERRORISTS ARE SUSPECTED OF ENGINEERING THE BLOODY MAY-DAY MASSACRE OF 496 SOVIET CITIZENS.

"AROUND THE GLOBE, BOTH HEADS OF STATE, AS WELL AS THRONGS OF CIVILIANS, HAVE COME OUT IN TOTAL SUPPORT OF SUPERMAN'S ACTIONS."

2

3

"AMAZINGLY, DESPITE THE DESTRUCTION OF BILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN WEAPONS, NOT ONE QURAQUI LIFE WAS LOST.

"SUPERMAN PLANNED HIS ATTACK WELL.

"WE HAVE A TAPE OF SUPERMAN'S SECOND MEETING WITH QURAC'S PRESIDENT, HURRAMBI MARLO."

PUT DOWN YOUR WEAPONS BEFORE SOMEONE GETS HURT!

DESTROYER! KILLER! THE WORLD WILL KNOW THE EVIL YOU HAVE DONE HERE!

WE ARE A PEACEFUL NATION, YET YOU INVADED US! DESTROYED OUR PROPERTY! THIS IS A SLAP IN THE FACE TO EVERY INTERNATIONAL LAW KNOWN TO CIVILIZED MAN!

THAT'S QUITE A PERFORMANCE FOR THE CAMERAS, MARLO--BUT WE *ALL* KNOW THE *TRUTH* ABOUT YOU AND YOUR *GOONS!* I SUGGEST QURAC LEARN FROM THIS LESSON! I MAY NOT BE SO LENIENT A *SECOND* TIME!

YOU'RE A DEAD MAN. I SWEAR YOU WON'T GET AWAY WITH THIS. I'LL... I'LL...

STUCK FOR AN IDEA OF WHAT TO DO, MARLO?

SUE ME.

THAT WAS QURAC LATE LAST NIGHT. SINCE THEN, REPORTERS WERE ORDERED TO LEAVE QURAC. WHILE THERE HAS BEEN NO *OFFICIAL* NEWS DEALING WITH THE REPERCUSSIONS OF SUPERMAN'S DEEDS, UNOFFICIAL REPORTS INDICATE WIDESPREAD CHAOS IN THE STREETS.

CBS

THERE IS TALK OF REVOLUTION AND A COUP D'ETAT. MORE ON THIS STORY AS DETAILS BECOME AVAILABLE. MEANWHILE, IN METROPOLIS, THE TRIAL OF REPUTED MOBSTER JAY FALK BEGINS THIS WEEK. WE'LL HAVE OUR REPORT AFTER THIS WORD.

THIS IS IT, CAT--PERRY'S BIG MOMENT.

YEAH, BUT I *WORRY* FOR HIM, CLARK. WHAT HE'S DOING IS *DANGEROUS.*

4

HE'S PUSHING THE MOB, AND THEY'LL PUSH BACK--*HARD*.

I'VE COME UP AGAINST THOSE TYPES IN THE *MOVIE BUSINESS*. THEY'RE *NOT* VERY NICE.

ONE OF THESE DAYS YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO *TELL* ME ABOUT THE MOVIE BIZ. IT SOUNDS FASCI-NATING.

ONLY IF YOU KNOW THE RIGHT PEOPLE. AND I KNOW *LOTS* OF THEM, *MMHHMM*.

YES, WELL...THE TROUBLE WITH PERRY IS THAT HE'S EVERY BIT AS HARD-HITTING AS HE WAS WHEN HE WAS YOUNGER.

HE'S NOT A YOUNG MAN ANYMORE, BUT HE'S JUST AS *IDEALISTIC* AS ANY CUB REPORTER! NOBODY CAN CORRUPT HIM! HE'S BRUTALLY FAIR, AND SOMETIMES THAT RUBS PEOPLE THE WRONG WAY.

BUT PERRY *CARES*, AND I'D RATHER WORK FOR HIM THAN ANYBODY ELSE. HE HAS MY *TRUST*... AND MY RESPECT.

HE'S KINDA LIKE YOU, HANDSOME. IN YOUR BABY-BLUE EYES I SEE THAT YOU'RE HERE BECAUSE YOU WANT TO *HELP* PEOPLE. YOU'RE ONE OF THE *GOOD* GUYS.

DAMN FEW OF YOU WINDMILL-TILTERS LEFT.

GUESS THAT'S BECAUSE I WAS A *BOY SCOUT* WHEN I GREW UP.

MMMHHMMM. ARE YOU *ALWAYS* PREPARED?

I TRY TO BE.

I *BET* YOU ARE.

...AS THE TRIAL OF MOBSTER JAY FALK BEGINS THURSDAY, ONE SURPRISING FACT TO SURFACE IS THAT MUCH OF THE EVIDENCE IN THE CASE WAS UNCOVERED NOT BY THE POLICE OR F.B.I., WHO HAVE INVESTIGATED FALK FOR THREE YEARS...

...BUT BY THE REPORTERS OF THE *METROPOLIS DAILY PLANET*, WORKING UNDER THE DIRECTION OF *MANAGING EDITOR* PERRY WHITE.

ER...THIS IS WHAT WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR, CAT.

5

WHITE WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN SEARCHING OUT THE INFORMATION HIMSELF, AND HEADING UP THE TEAM OF REPORTERS WHICH FERRETED OUT THE EVIDENCE THAT LAW AGENCIES WERE UNABLE TO UNCOVER.

JUDY GROFFMAN FILED THIS REPORT FROM THE DAILY PLANET OFFICES.

THANK YOU, DAN. I'M HERE WITH PERRY WHITE, THE PLANET'S VETERAN EDITOR, MR. WHITE--

--YOU'VE BEEN LEADING THIS CRUSADE AGAINST FALK FOR *MONTHS* NOW...

... SOME SAY YOU'VE BEEN THREATENED, THAT YOUR LIFE MAY BE IN DANGER. WHY CONTINUE? WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

THE *TRUTH*, JUDY. MAYBE IT'S AN ARCHAIC CONCEPT THESE DAYS, BUT I *LIVE* BY IT! I'VE GIVEN MY *WORD* TO THE PEOPLE OF THIS CITY THAT THE PLANET WILL ALWAYS REPORT THE TRUTH, NO MATTER THE RISK.

SOMEBODY HAS TO TAKE A STAND, JUDY. FALK WAS A PUBLIC FIGURE WHO **BETRAYED** THE PUBLIC TRUST. HE USED HIS INFLUENCE FOR PERSONAL GAIN, AND WHEN HE WAS DISCOVERED, HE TRIED TO ELIMINATE WITNESSES WITH PAY-OFFS, INTIMIDATION -- AND *PERHAPS*, EVEN MORE *PERMANENT* SOLUTIONS!

THIS CITY CANNOT BE HELD HOSTAGE BY SOME WELL-CONNECTED CRIMINAL, AND I HAVE VOWED TO SEE JAY FALK BEHIND BARS FOR HIS CRIMES.

THE *PUBLIC TRUST* MUST NEVER BE VIOLATED! NEVER!

6

ELSEWHERE...

I DUNNO...IT'S HARD. I MEAN, WOW, YOU KNOW WHAT THEY'LL *DO* TO ME IF I QUIT?

JERRY, WHAT WILL YOU DO TO YOURSELF IF YOU DON'T?

YOU WANT TO WIND UP LIKE LOUIS? OR STEFEN? OR MAYBE CAUGHT BY THE *COPS* TO SPEND HALF YOUR LIFE IN *JAIL*?

MAN, YOU'RE NINETEEN, JERRY. QUIT THE *COBRAS*!

TAXI

I KNOW, I KNOW. JOSÉ, YOU'RE NOT MAKING THINGS *EASY*.

YEAH. TELL ME ABOUT IT. BUT I KNOW YOU'RE RIGHT.

LIFE ISN'T EASY, PAL.

I KNOW YOU KNOW. YOU'RE A *SMART* KID.

YEAH, THAT'S WHAT MY MOM AND DAD ALWAYS SAY.

HEY, PARENTS AREN'T ALWAYS WRONG. JUST NINETY PERCENT OF THE TIME. YOU'LL DO THE *RIGHT* THING, JERRY.

YEAH, I WILL. THANKS, JOSÉ.

DAD'LL *LOVE* IT WHEN I QUIT. MAYBE IT'S 'CAUSE 'A HIM I'VE *STAYED* IN SO LONG.

DAMN...I'M WASTING MY WHOLE LIFE BY REACTING TO *HIM* INSTEAD OF LIVING FOR ME.

HE'S ALWAYS *PUSHING* ME! "MR. WHITE, JERRY HAS TREMENDOUS POTENTIAL BUT HE JUST WON'T *WORK* AT IT."

"JERRY, YOUR TEACHERS SAY YOU'RE NOT WORKING. HELL, SON, WHEN I WAS YOUR AGE..." DAMMIT, DAD, THOSE WERE DIFFERENT TIMES. YOU TRY LIVING TODAY.

AND DON'T DARE TELL ME WHAT I CAN AND CAN'T DO! I'M *NINETEEN* YEARS OLD. I'M LIVING ON MY OWN. I *WORK* FOR MY MONEY. I DON'T NEED ANY LECTURE CRAP FROM YOU!

CALLOUS OLD MAN! THE CITY THINKS HE'S *WONDERFUL*! THEY DON'T KNOW HIM LIKE I DO.

HEY, WHITE--

--WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, PUNK?

I HEAR YOU'RE *QUITTING* THE GANG. IF ZAT'S SO, YOU DON'T *BELONG* IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD NO MORE.

EDDIE, C'MON, PUT THAT DOWN!

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SURE, MAN--I'LL PUT IT DOWN--DOWN YOUR STINKIN' THROAT!
NO WAY, EDDIE--I'M NOT GIVING YOU THE CHANCE!
HEY, GUYS--C'MON!
BEEN HANGIN' AROUND THE *GUIDANCE COUNSELOR*, EH?
YOU'RE A *TRAITOR*, MAN!
LOUSY STINKIN' TRAITOR, WHITE!
THINK YOU'RE GONNA BE SOME *DO-GOODER*, PUNK? LIKE YOUR OLD MAN?
WHAD YOU TELL DELGADO? C'MON, WHITE--WHAD YOU TELL THAT LOUSY TEACHER?
I-I DIDN'T... COULDN'T... OH, GOD... STOP--!
HE'S NO GOOD--*CUT 'IM.*
TEACH ANYONE ELSE WHO TRIES TO QUIT.
ONE WHITE-BOY CORPSE... CARVED LIKE SOME DAMN THANKSGIVING TURKEY.
THAT'S *IT*, BOYS. THE GAME'S *OVER*.
BLAM!
HUH?
GET *OUT* OF HERE. LEAVE WHITE ALONE.
HE'S *OURS*!
YOU CAN *HAVE* 'IM.
PUNKS... GOOD FOR NOTHING. THEY'LL *NEVER* MAKE IT!
LET'S GET *OUT* OF HERE BEFORE SOME STUPID COP DECIDES TO CHECK OUT THAT GUNFIRE!
WHITE'S IN THE CAR! WE CAN *SPLIT*!
8

WE'VE GOT A LIST OF FALK'S HIRED THUGS. I HOPE WE CAN GET AT LEAST *ONE* TO TALK.

HOPING ALONE ISN'T GOING TO GET THE ANSWERS WE NEED, KENT--CHECK OUT THE LIST-- DO WHATEVER YOU HAVE TO, BUT *MAKE* IT HAPPEN.

RING

WHITE HERE. I'M BUSY, WHAT IS IT?

D-DAD, IT'S ME...

JERRY, IS THIS REALLY IMPORTANT? I TOLD YOU, I'M *BUSY* HERE.

DAMMIT, DAD, LISTEN TO ME. SOME CROOKS GOT TO ME, BEAT ME UP...

GIVE IT TO *ME*, KID.

WHITE, I THINK IT'S PLAIN WE'VE GOT YOUR SON.

WHO ARE YOU? WHAT DO YOU WANT? HAVE YOU HURT HIM?

WHY WAS *CONCERN* FOR YOUR SON YOUR *THIRD* QUESTION, WHITE?

YOU KNOW YOUR EXPOSÉ ON MR. FALK? WE WANT YOU TO *KILL* IT! NOW!

AND WE WANT RETRACTIONS, WHITE. MR. FALK IS A PUBLIC-MINDED CITIZEN. GOT THAT, WHITE?

OR YOU AND YOUR WIFE ARE SUDDENLY CHILDLESS.

I... UNDER-STAND.

MY GOD.

PLEASE -- LEAVE ME ALONE NOW.

SOMETHING WRONG, CHIEF?

DO I HAVE TO *SKYWRITE* WHAT I SAID? "GET OUT!!"

SURE, CHIEF. SORRY, CHIEF.

OH, MY DEAR SWEET LORD IN HEAVEN.

JERRY.

THIS ISN'T *LUNCH HOUR*-- GET MOVING! *GREAT CAESAR'S GHOST!* WHAT AM I *PAYING* YOU PEOPLE FOR? GET TO WORK!

DIDN'T YOU HEAR ME, KENT? *TYPE SOMETHING!*

WOW! I'VE GOTTEN OUT OF LOTS OF BEDS ON THE *WRONG* SIDE, BUT *NEVER* LIKE THAT.

HE'S NOT SAYING A *WORD* ABOUT THAT PHONE CALL. HE DOESN'T WANT *ANYONE* TO KNOW ABOUT HIS SON.

BUT WITH MY *SUPER-SENSITIVE* HEARING I OVER-HEARD IT. AND I'M NOT JUST ANYONE!

AND SOON...

WONDERFUL PARTY, MR. FALK.

C'MON IN, COUNCILMAN, AND PLEASE, CALL ME *JAY.*

ANDREW, GET COUNCILMAN RIVERS AND HIS WIFE *ANYTHING* THEY WISH.

ANDREW, THE *CAVIAR'S* RUNNING OUT. DISH UP A FEW MORE BOWLS, EH?

SIR, THE CASPIAN *SEVRUGA* NEVER ARRIVED. MAY I SUBSTITUTE SOME OREGON GOLDEN *MALLOSOL?*

JAY, DEAR, MAHVELOUS PAHTY. DEFINITELY AN "*A-PLUS*".

DAGMAR, YOU'RE THE PLUS MY PARTY NEEDED. AND HOW ARE *YOU*, KLAUS? THE NEW YACHT STILL FLOATING?

IT'S WONDERFUL LIVING ON A HOUSE BOAT, JAY. YOU SHOULD *TRY* IT SOME TIME.

SORRY, KLAUS, NOT FOR ME... *QUEASY* STOMACH AND ALL THAT. AHH, SENATOR STANTON...

10

IT'S SUPERMAN!
NOT BAD! NOT BAD AT ALL!
HE CERTAINLY *IS* SPLENDID.
SUPERMAN, I DIDN'T KNOW *YOU* WERE ONE OF JAY'S FRIENDS!
I'M *NOT!* BUT I ALWAYS LIKE TO CONFRONT THE BAD GUYS IN A CIVILIZED MANNER *BEFORE* THINGS GET OUT OF HAND.
EASY, JOSEF. I WILL HANDLE THIS.

HIYA, SUPES, GLAD YOU COULD *MAKE* IT. WANT A *DRINK*? YOU *DO* DRINK, DON'T YOU?
THIS ISN'T A *PLEASURE* VISIT, FALK.
PERRY WHITE'S KID. WHERE IS HE?

IN SCHOOL? MAKIN' OUT WITH THE GIRLS? HOW THE HELL SHOULD I KNOW?
NICE WORK OF ART, FALK.
YEAH, IT'S AN ORIGINAL *RODIN*. COST ME A BUNDLE!

REALLY? THEN YOU WERE RIPPED OFF. IT'S A FAKE!
WHITE'S SON?

:*ACHHH*: GET *OUT* OF HERE, SUPERMAN! YOU'RE TRESPASSING!
I DON'T KNOW NOTHING! AND I'M SAYIN' EVEN LESS!

WHERE'S PERRY WHITE'S SON, FALK?
HEY, PUT DOWN THAT *FABERGE*.

THIS ONE *IS* AUTHENTIC. VERY RARE. VERY *FRAGILE*! WHITE'S SON?

BREAK THAT AND I'LL *SUE* YOU! SO HELP ME!
GET *OUT*, SUPERMAN, I'M CLEAN!

I AM *NOT* CONVINCED.
I'LL BE BACK.
CATCH!

ANTONIO CORSETTI HAS WORKED FOR JAY FALK FOR MORE THAN THREE YEARS. HE LIKES HIS JOB...

...AND THE OCCASIONAL FRINGE BENEFITS.

CORSETTI IS A PAID GUN...

...BUT, TONIGHT HE IS MERELY A GUARD. EASY MONEY.

HE WAS SWORN TO PROTECT FALK'S ESTATE WITH HIS LIFE.

AIEEEE!

THE QUESTION NOW IS: WHO WILL PROTECT ANTONIO?

HI THERE! FLY THE FRIENDLY SKIES?

HELP! LEMME GO! I GET *AIR SICK!*

SO DO I. WANT SOME *DRAMAMINE?* I ALWAYS CARRY EXTRA.

WATCH YOUR FEET, FRIEND.

FOR GOD'S SAKE, WHAT DO YOU WANT?

GUESS.

AHHH, HERE WE ARE. THE *DAILY PLANET BUILDING.* A PERFECT OUT-OF-THE-WAY PLACE TO TALK.

DAILY PLAN

YOU *DO* LIKE TO CHAT, DON'T YOU, ANTONIO? Y'SEE, I NEED SOME *INFORMATION.*

WHERE IS PERRY WHITE'S SON?

I DON'T KNOW... I CAN'T TALK! PLEASE, I CAN'T DEAL WITH *HEIGHTS!*

12

I'LL FALL! I'LL DIE!

GEE, I SURE HOPE NOT.

THEN I'D *NEVER* FIND OUT WHAT YOU KNOW.

STILL NOT READY TO TALK, EH?

NO PROBLEM. I'LL GIVE YOU SOME TIME TO REMEMBER --THEN I'LL BE BACK!

OH, YES, DON'T LOOK DOWN!

NOOOO!

YOU WON'T LEAVE ME HERE! YOU'RE *SUPERMAN!*

YOU NEVER HURT--

SUPERMAN?

:GULP:

OH, GOD, PLEASE, GOD... HELP ME.

GOTTA CRAWL DOWN... INCH-BY-INCH. OH, GOD, THE *HEIGHT*...

DAILY PLANET

HI. *MISS* ME? I HAD TO RESCUE A *CAT* FROM A FIRE.

THIS WON'T MAKE ME TALK, SUPERMAN. I KNOW YOU WON'T HURT ME. YOU'VE NEVER HURT ANYBODY.

HEY, I AGREE WITH YOU THERE, ANTONIO...

...I'D NEVER HURT YOU!

BUT Y'KNOW, I'M A BUSY GUY, AND I MIGHT NOT BE AROUND WHEN YOU FINALLY DO *SLIP!*

OOOOH, IT IS A *LONG WAY DOWN*, ISN'T IT? ALMOST MAKES *ME* DIZZY!

SAY, IS THAT A *PLANE* I HEAR? ABOUT TO CRASH?

GUESS I HAVE TO GO *RESCUE* IT. HOLD ON TIGHT, ANTONIO! THIS *MAY* TAKE AWHILE!

OKAY, OKAY. I'LL *TALK!* I'LL *TALK!*

GOOD BOY, ANTONIO. I'M SURE YOU, I, AND THE METROPOLIS SANITATION DEPARTMENT WILL APPRECIATE IT.

THEY WON'T BE NEEDING THEIR *SPATULAS* FOR YOU... *THIS TIME!*

LATER...

BABES

:ahem:!

PAC-M

YEAH, WHAT DO *YOU* WANT? BEER? SCOTCH?

MMM.

WATER.

AND INFO.

JERRY WHITE... RECENTLY KIDNAPPED... I'M LOOKING FOR SOMEONE NAMED LOUIE.

I'M TOLD HE *FREQUENTS* THIS, UH-- ESTABLISHMENT.

HEY, YOU DON'T BELONG HERE, MAN. LOUIE LYPPE AIN'T HERE.

GET OUT WHILE YOU CAN.

EXCUSE ME? YOU *ARE* TALKING TO ME, AREN'T YOU?

YOU ASKIN' TOO MANY *QUESTIONS*, MAN.

DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM?

YEAH--SOME *JERK* IN A SUPERMAN COSTUME --

WE GET 'EM ALLA THE TIME!

NOW I SAID-- *GET OUWCH!*

MY HAND!

DON'T WORRY, YOU DIDN'T BREAK ANYTHING. JUST SOAK IT IN HOT WATER...

LOUIS LYPPE?

NAH, NOT ME, SUPERMAN! NAME'S BENNY. WANNA SEE MY DRIVER'S *I.D.*?

AND OF COURSE YOU HAVE *NO* IDEA WHERE MR. LYPPE IS, DO YOU, BENNY?

LOUIE LYPPE? NEVER HOID O' HIM!

14

WRONG TREE, BARKER. NOBODY HERE'S GONNA SAY NOTHIN'.

SOME MEN GOT *FRIENDS*...

...LOTS OF FRIENDS WITH LONG, LONG MEMORIES FOR THOSE WHO AREN'T FRIENDS.

IF YOU PEOPLE ARE *FRIGHTENED*, YOU CAN BE PROTECTED--

OH, NO... WHAT NOW? MORE TROUBLE?

NAH, NAH...YER TOUGH... I *LIKE* TOUGH.

BIBBO BUY YOU *BEER*? LIKE REAL TOUGH GUYS.

NO THANKS, ER... BIBBO. ANOTHER TIME.

ACE CLUBS

Ribbon beer

Clubs

:SIGH: ONLY TWO MILES FROM THE DAILY PLANET AND IT MIGHT AS WELL *BE* ANOTHER PLANET!

WELL, AT LEAST I GOT LOUIE'S *LAST NAME*. I CAN GET HIS ADDRESS FROM THE *POST OFFICE* OR *TELEPHONE COMPANY*.

AND...

I... I CAN'T DO IT, DAMMIT! I KEEP TRYING. I KEEP *WRITING* THE SAME LOUSY PIECE OVER AND OVER AGAIN!

HEAVEN HELP ME, BUT I CAN'T *LIE* TO THE PUBLIC...

...NOT EVEN TO SAVE MY OWN *SON*!

BUT IF I DON'T... GOD, IF I DON'T--

--I DON'T EVEN WANT TO *THINK* WHAT WILL HAPPEN.

WORLD'S GREATES HUSBA

PERRY?

HOW'S IT COMING...?

YOU'VE *WRITTEN* IT, HAVEN'T YOU? THE *RETRACTION*? IT'S FINISHED? THEY'LL *READ* IT IN TOMORROW'S PAPER, WON'T THEY?

THEY WON'T HURT JERRY, RIGHT?

15

I... I KNOW HOW *HARD* THAT WAS. C'MON, I'LL GIVE YOU A NICE *BACK RUB*, THEN WE'LL GO TO BED.

JERRY WILL BE BACK TOMORROW, RIGHT?

AND WHEN HE'S *SAFE*, YOU CAN WRITE WHATEVER YOU WANT.

ALICE, I-I HAVEN'T WRITTEN IT YET.

WHY NOT? WHAT'S SO HARD? JUST SAY ANY-THING. IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE TRUE.

IT DOES! I CAN'T LIE! I HAVEN'T LIED IN FIFTY YEARS! HOW CAN I START NOW?

IT'S NOT FOR YOU... IT'S FOR OUR *SON*! THEY'LL *KILL* HIM IF YOU DON'T!

PERRY, I'VE TRIED, LORD KNOWS I'VE TRIED NOT TO BREAK DOWN BECAUSE OF THIS.

BUT I DON'T WANT HIM *DEAD* BECAUSE YOU WON'T WRITE SOME STUPID STORY ABOUT SOME STUPID CROOK NOBODY BESIDES YOU CARES ABOUT!

WE'RE TALKING ABOUT OUR *SON*!

I CARRIED HIM FOR *NINE MONTHS*! I'LL WRITE THAT DAMN STORY FOR YOU IF I HAVE TO!

ALICE... I'M SORRY, I DIDN'T MEAN...

MY SWEET HEAVEN... ALICE, WE'LL GET HIM BACK. I SWEAR WE'LL GET HIM BACK.

16

...YA REALLY GONNA TAKE ME TO PARIS, LOUIE?

SURE, BABE, SURE... AFTER I SEE WHAT YOU CAN DO.

MAKE ME REAL *HAPPY*, AN' PARIS'LL ONLY BE THE *BEGINNIN'!*

C'MON, THIS IS *MY* PLACE. REAL *COZY.*

OOOOH, IT'S SO *DARK.*

NO PROBLEM, BABE. I'LL--

WHAT THE--? LIGHT'S OUT!

SO WHAT. WE DON'T *NEED* LIGHTS, DO WE, BABE?

HEY, LOUIE?

GOT *TALKIN'* T'DO, LYPPE.

HEY, LOUIE, WHO'S THAT?

DO ME A *FAVOR*, BABE-- GET ME SOME *CIGARETTES* AT THE CORNER. I'LL GIVE YOU THE BUCKS LATER.

YOU STUPID OX, WHAT THE HELL ARE *YOU* DOIN' HERE?

NO OX, LOUIE. JUST ME. DON' LIKE NO NAME-CALLIN', LOUIE.

SUPERMAN... HE'S ASKIN' FOR YOU, LOUIE... AT THE ACE O'CLUBS.

WHERE'S THE *KID*, LOUIE? TELL ME OR I'LL BREAK YOUR BACK!

ARE YOU *CRAZY*, BIBBO? WHAT DO YOU CARE?

CARE... CARE *PLENTY*, LOUIE!

TELL ME WHERE'S THE KID, LOUIE?

OKAY, OKAY, JUST LEAVE MY BACK. IT'S BAD ENOUGH AS IT IS.

WHERE, LOUIE? *WHERE?*

THE DOCKS... THE MORGAN EXPORT COMPANY. HAPPY NOW?

WHY'S IT SO *IMPORTANT* TO YOU? NEVER SEEN YOU SO *CRAZY* BEFORE!

C-CIGARETTE?

MAN, I THOUGHT YOU WERE GONNA *KILL* ME!

WHY'S THAT *KID* SO IMPORTANT TO YOU ANYWAY?

HEY, YOU GOTTA *LIGHT?*

SURE, LOUIE...

...BUT DON'T YOU KNOW *SMOKING* IS DEFINITELY *HAZARDOUS* TO YOUR LIFE?

S-SUPERMAN? YOU'RE NOT--

NO, I'M NOT! AND HE HAD *NOTHING* TO DO WITH MY *COMING* HERE, LOUIE!

SO IF BIBBO GETS HURT, I MAY BE FORCED TO TELL YOUR *BOSS* ABOUT OUR LITTLE TALK! GOT IT?

OKAY, OKAY... I WON'T DO NOTHIN'. JUST DON'T HURT ME! PLEASE DON'T HURT ME!

BE A GOOD BOY, AND YOU'LL BE ALL RIGHT.

DIDN'T REALLY EXPECT THESE TACTICS TO WORK *THIS* WELL.

18

I'M DOING THE *RIGHT* THING. I'VE *GOT* TO BE!

I KNOW I AM.

I PRAY TO GOD I AM. AND I HOPE HE... AND ALICE... AND JERRY... WILL *FORGIVE* ME...

WORLD'S GREATEST

WHEN'S THE PLANET SUPPOSED TO BE OUT, MAN?

SICK 'A THIS STINKIN' *WAITING!*

WHOLESALE MORGAN EXPORT CO

MORGAN EXPORT

WON'T HAVE TO WAIT MUCH LONGER.

BE OVER SOON ENOUGH. WHITE'LL GIVE IN. THE BOSS'LL BE FREE.

AND THIS PUNK'LL BE DAISY FERTILIZER!

SHHH, THIS IS THE *GOOD* PART... WHERE SHEMP--

KRAKOOM!

YOU'RE RIGHT, IT *WILL* BE OVER.

FOR *YOU*.'

S-SUPERMAN?!

H-HOW?

A LITTLE *ANGEL* TOLD ME.

YOU SURE IT WASN'T THE *DEVIL*?

FREEZE, OR THIS KID'S BRAINS WILL BE WALL DECORATION!

19

WILL THEY *UNDERSTAND*? CAN THEY?

I... I WANT TO DO THE *RIGHT* THING, BUT THE LINE'S TOO *NARROW*... CAN'T WALK ON IT... AND BOTH SIDES...

... BOTH SIDES ARE SO *WRONG*.

WHATEVER I DO... I'M DAMNED.

I KNOW YOU'RE NERVOUS! JUST PUT DOWN THE WEAPON AND I'LL SEE ABOUT GETTING YOU OFF LIGHTLY!

THIS CAN BE WORKED OUT!

YOU CRAZY, MAN? IT'S MY *THIRD COUNT!* IF THIS GOES WRONG, I'M *OUT* OF IT!

NO CHOICE, MAN... I *GOTTA* GO THROUGH WITH THIS!

I GAVE YOU A CHANCE...

...AND I'M SORRY YOU DIDN'T TAKE IT.

I PROMISE THIS *WON'T* HURT!

MY PANTS! MY PANTS ARE ON *FIRE*!!

MY GOD! MY GOD! YOU'RE BURNING ME TO DEATH!

DON'T *KILL* ME! TAKE MY GUN! *TAKE IT!*

OH, LORD... PUT OUT THE FIRE!!

WHAT ARE YOU *STANDING* THERE FOR? *SAVE ME!?*

DON'T WORRY, I WAS *PLANNING* TO!

I WOULDN'T HAVE LET THE *HEAT* REACH HIM. HE WAS *MORE SCARED* THAN IN ANY REAL DANGER.

THEY'LL BE OUT UNTIL INSPECTOR HENDERSON CAN ARRIVE!

AND YOU'RE SAFE... WHICH MEANS ALL'S WELL!

LISTEN, I KNOW WHAT YOU'VE GONE THROUGH... IF YOU NEED TO *TALK* ABOUT IT... I'LL BE HERE FOR YOU.

BUT RIGHT NOW I WANT TO GET YOU *HOME*. YOUR DAD'S WORRIED SICK!

DAD? MR. DAILY PLANET HIMSELF? MR. TRUTH AND HONESTY OVER HIS FAMILY? I GOT NOTHING TO SAY TO HIM!

I SINCERELY HOPE THAT'S NOT TRUE, JERRY. YOUR FATHER'S A *GOOD* MAN. AND HE *LOVES* YOU.

YEAH, RIGHT AFTER THE NEWSPAPER! THAT'S HIS *TRUE* LOVE, SUPERMAN! NOT ME AND NOT MY MOM!

MORGAN EXPORT

PERRY?

GREAT CAESAR'S GHOST! JERRY! THANK HEAVEN!

I WAS SO *WORRIED*.

YEAH, I CAN SEE THAT, DAD!

YOU WRITE WHAT THEY TOLD YOU TO, DAD?

I JUST *STARTED*... I WAS GOING TO WRITE IT. IT WASN'T EASY, BUT--

SAVING ME WASN'T EASY? LYING IN THAT DAMN PAPER OF YOURS WASN'T EASY?

FACE IT, DAD, THAT PAPER'S *ALL* THAT'S EVER MEANT ANYTHING TO YOU!

THE PAPER! THE AWARDS! HONESTY! TRUTH! INTEGRITY! YOU'RE SO DAMN FILLED WITH INTEGRITY YOU'D LET ME DIE FOR IT?

FOR WHAT, DAD? FOR ANOTHER AWARD? ANOTHER MEDAL?

JUST WAIT ONE SECOND, YOUNG MAN--

21

NO, *YOU* WAIT! I'VE *HAD* IT! YOU WEREN'T THERE TIED UP WITH THOSE MADMEN! YOU DIDN'T HEAR THEM *CHUCKLING* OVER WHAT THEY'D DO TO ME!

I WAS GOING TO SAVE YOU!

YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT I HAD TO DO! YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND THE *SACRIFICE* I WAS GOING TO MAKE!

OH, DAD, I UNDERSTAND ALL ABOUT SACRIFICE.

THIS YOUR LITTLE ARTICLE OF LIES, DAD? TOO LITTLE, POPS!

AND FAR, FAR TOO LATE!

JERRY--

NO, MA, LEAVE ME BE, OKAY?

IF IT WERE UP TO DAD, HE'D'VE LET ME *DIE* RATHER THAN WRITE SOME LIE IN THAT GREAT BIG PAPER OF HIS!

I...I GOTTA GET OUTTA HERE!

I GOTTA GO THINK!

AND MAYBE, DAD, MAYBE--YOU SHOULD DO SOME THINKING, TOO.

22

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BY BYRNE & GIORDANO

SUPERMAN® VS. THE DEMON™

ACTION COMICS

587
APR. 87

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

THOUGH WE'VE FOUGHT SIDE BY SIDE, MAN OF STEEL--

--YOU MUST *DIE*, SO THAT MILLIONS MAY LIVE!

CITY OF LOST SOULS!

MISS MARK! SO GOOD TO SEE YOU!

IT HAS BEEN A WHILE!

YES, IT HAS. BUT NOT BECAUSE I *PLANNED* IT THAT WAY.

MR. JANKE, I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET A VERY GOOD FRIEND OF MINE, *JASON BLOOD*.

THE WORLD-FAMOUS *DEMONOLOGIST*? YOU *HONOR* MY LITTLE SHOP, SIR.

THANK YOU, SIR. *GLENDA* HAS SPOKEN *HIGHLY* OF YOUR ESTABLISHMENT.

MY *FRIENDS* AND I WERE *EAGER* TO SEE YOUR COLLECTION OF *ANTIQUITIES*.

YOU SEEM TO HAVE FOUND A FRIEND, *HARRY*.

I DUNNO, *RANDU*. KINDA REMINDS ME OF MY LAST *BLIND DATE*!

YOU'LL NOT FIND A *MORE EXTENSIVE* COLLECTION IN THIS CITY, MR. BLOOD.

OH, THIS IS *BEAUTIFUL*! WHAT IS IT, MR. JANKE?

ER... BEST BE *CAREFUL* WITH THAT, MISS MARK. I JUST *ACQUIRED* IT, AND I'M NOT REALLY SURE...

LOOK! THERE'S SOME KIND OF *CATCH* ON THE SIDE. I DO BELIEVE IT...

CLIC

...OPENS...

OW!!

G-2993

SUPERMAN and THE DEMON:

CITYSCAPE!

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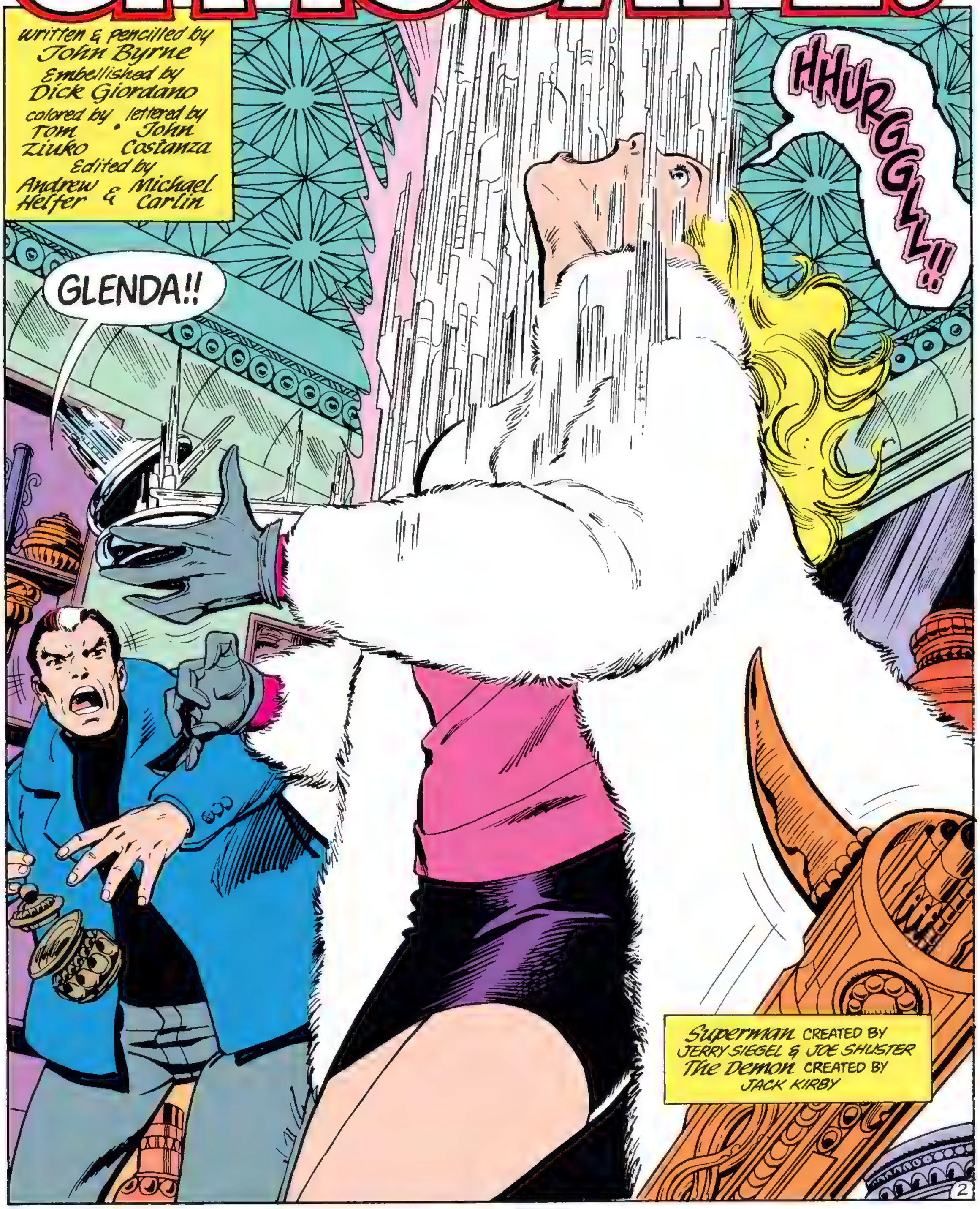

SHE... SHE'S BEEN *CONSUMED!!*

NO! *TRANSFORMED!* CHANGED INTO A PERFECT *MODEL* OF SOME FANTASTIC... *BUILDING!*

AND IT'S *GROWING!*

GROWING, AND...

MR. JANKE!

HARRY!!

RANDU!!

THEY'RE BEING *TRANSFORMED*, TOO!

IT'S AS IF A MINIATURE *CITY* IS BEING CREATED IN THE MIDDLE OF THE SHOP!

AND NOW IT'S AFTER *ME!!*

3

BUT I HAVE A WAY TO STOP IT!

CHANGE, CHANGE, O FORM OF MAN!

RELEASE THE MIGHT FROM FLESHY MIRE!

BOIL THE BLOOD IN HEART OF FIRE!

GONE, GONE, THE FORM OF MAN!

RISE THE DEMON...

...ETRIGAN!!

HAHAHAHA!!

THIS MYSTIC *ARTIFACT* IS NOT STRONG ENOUGH TO PIERCE *A DEMON'S* HIDE!!

BUT THE *FRIENDS* OF MY *OTHER SELF* ARE STILL ITS HELPLESS *VICTIMS!*

ETRIGAN MUST FIND A WAY TO *SAVE* THEM!!

4

BUT *HOW!??*

THE TOWERS CONTINUE TO *GROW*... SOON THEY WILL *BURST* OUT OF THE SHOP.

HOW CAN I *CONTAIN* THEM, WITHOUT *HARMING* THE MORTALS THEY *WERE*...?

IF, IN TRUTH, THOSE MORTALS STILL *LIVE!*

WHAT TH!...??

GEORGE! WHAT...

WHAT *IS* THAT??

5

ELSEWHERE...

THERE...

I'VE DELIVERED THE REPLACEMENT *GENERATOR* TO THAT SOVIET SPACE STATION--MY LITTLE CONTRIBUTION TO *DÉTENTE*.

NOW IT'S TIME TO HEAD ON HOME TO *METROPOLIS* AND BACK TO MY LIFE AS *CLARK KENT*.

BEING *SUPERMAN* HAS ITS *FUN SIDE*, TO BE SURE...

BUT IF I DIDN'T HAVE A NICE, *NORMAL* IDENTITY TO SLIP INTO...

...I'D PROBABLY HAVE GONE RIGHT OFF THE DEEP END BY...

HMMM...

THAT'S *GOTHAM CITY* JUST AHEAD.

THE BATMAN'S TERRITORY.

I HAVEN'T BEEN ANYWHERE NEAR HERE SINCE...

GOOD LORD!!

THOSE TOWERS... THEY *SEEM* TO BE *GROWING* IN THE MIDDLE OF THE CITY!

CRUSHING EVERYTHING IN THEIR PATH!!

6

WELL, I'LL JUST *BET* THIS ISN'T PART OF SOME *URBAN RENEWAL* SCHEME.

SO, EVEN THOUGH THIS IS, STRICTLY SPEAKING, ANOTHER *SUPERHERO'S* TURF...

...LET'S SEE IF I CAN'T *SLOW* THESE THINGS *DOWN* JUST A TAD!

NOOOO!

EH?

THE *DEMON*?!?

I DON'T KNOW *HOW* YOU'RE *INVOLVED* IN THIS, *ETRIGAN*...

BUT IF YOU'VE FINALLY *REVERTED* TO YOUR HELL-BORN BEGINNINGS, AND TURNED *AGAINST* HUMANKIND...

YOU'LL FIND ME READY TO *STOP YOU!!*

NOW *GET OFF ME!!*

NO! NO! NO!

YOU MUST NOT *HARM* THE TOWERS!!

DEMON-FLAME!!

IT'S NOT... HARMING ME... PHYSICALLY...

BUT IT FEELS LIKE IT'S... BURNING RIGHT THROUGH MY BRAIN... MY SOUL!

MAKING IT... ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO... CONCENTRATE.

CAN BARELY... KEEP MYSELF... ALOFT.

ONE CHANCE...

AS I FALL PAST ETRIGAN...

GOT TO TWIST...

GOT HIM!!

NOW...

LET'S SEE WHAT CAN BE *DONE* TO *END* THIS!

AHHH-GH!

ETRIGAN *BEGS* YOU!

STAY YOUR HAND!

LOOK *BEHIND* YOU!

WHAT...??

WHAT ARE YOU...

...OH MY GOD...

SUPERMAN-- *STOP!!*

LOOK AT THE *TOWERS!*

THAT'S *BLOOD!*

HUMAN BLOOD!!

10

YES, MAN OF STEEL.

BLOOD.

THE BLOOD OF *INNOCENTS!*

INNOCENTS ETRIGAN HAS STRUGGLED TO *PROTECT.*

FOR EACH OF THESE TOWERS IS A *TRANSFORMED HUMAN BEING!*

MANY NOW *MORTALLY WOUNDED* BY YOUR ACTIONS, SUPERMAN.

MANY NOW *DYING* BECAUSE OF *YOU!*

N-NO...!!

HOW...

HOW COULD THIS TERRIBLE THING HAVE *HAPPENED?*

HOW COULD THAT *BE?*

THAT MATTERS LESS NOW THAN HOW IT MAY BE *UNDONE.*

UNDONE...?

YOU...YOU MEAN THERE'S STILL A CHANCE TO *SAVE* THESE PEOPLE?

HOW, DEMON?

HOW?!?

LESS "*HOW*" THAN "*WHEN*," SUPERMAN.

THE *DAMAGE* IS DONE. THE ONLY WAY TO *SAVE* THESE CURSED FOLK IS TO STOP THE HARM *BEFORE* IT HAPPENED...

...BY THE SPELL OF *TEMPUS FRANGIT!*

"*TEMPUS FRANGIT*"?

THAT'S... OLD *LATIN.* IT MEANS...

"...*TIME BREAKER!!!*"

11

WHAT...

WHERE... IS THIS PLACE...??

SUPERMAN!

DEMON!

WHERE ARE YOU?

I REMAIN IN THE *TWENTIETH CENTURY*, SUPERMAN. I COULD NOT CROSS MY OWN *TIMELINE*, TO TRAVEL WITH YOU.

HEAR ME. I HAVE BUT *SECONDS* TO SPEAK.

YOU ARE NOW IN THE YEAR *1162 A.D.* THAT IS THE *SOURCE* OF THE MAGIC WHICH CREATED THE LIVING TOWERS.

IN YONDER *TOWN* YOU WILL FIND THE HELP YOU NEED TO *VANQUISH* THIS EVIL, IF VANQUISHED IT MAY BE!

SEEK OUT *JASON BLOOD*, SUPERMAN. YOU HAVE *ONE HOUR* BEFORE THE SPELL I'VE WOVEN BREAKS, AND YOU RETURN TO THE *PRESENT*.

JASON BLOOD? BUT... HE'S A MAN OF MY OWN TIME--A *RESEARCHER* INTO THE *OCCULT*.

HOW CAN JASON BLOOD BE...

DEMON?

ETRIGAN!!

HE'S *GONE!*

"AND ALL I CAN DO IS... OBEY HIM!"

BRING OUT YUR DEAD!

BRING OUT YUR DEAD!!

THAT MAN...

HE'S COLLECTING THE *BODIES* OF THE VICTIMS OF THE *BLACK PLAGUE!*

WHAT HAS ETRIGAN DROPPED ME INTO??

EXCUSE ME, SIR, DO YOU KNOW... ER, I MEAN, KNOWEST THOU WHERE I MIGHT FIND A MAN CALLED *JASON BLOOD*?

EH?

12

SEEKEST THOU THE *STRANGE ONE?* THOU ART A STRANGER HERE THYSELF.

FORSOOTH, I KNOW NOT WHY ANY TRAVELLER WOULD STOP IN THIS *ACCURSED PLACE...*

...BUT HIM THOU SEEKEST DWELLS YONDER, IN THE FINAL HOUSE UPON THE LEFT.

THANK YOU...

CLAVE... WHO WERE THAT FELLOW?

A *KING*, I'LL WARRANT. WHO ELSE COULD WALK ABROAD WITH ROBES UNTOUCHED BY *FILTH!*

LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT...

NOT A VERY *WELCOMING* PLACE-- ALTHOUGH IT DOES APPEAR MR. BLOOD FARES SOMEWHAT BETTER THAN *MOST* OF HIS *NEIGHBORS.*

IS HE SOME *ANCESTOR* OF THE JASON BLOOD OF MY TIME? HOW CAN I *INTRODUCE* MYSELF? "*HI, I'M FROM THE FUTURE*" DOESN'T QUITE SEEM...

WELCOME, STRANGER. I HAVE BEEN *EXPECTING* THEE.

13

EXPECTING ME...?

OF COURSE.

I *SENSED* THE MYSTICAL FORCE WHICH BROUGHT THEE HERE.

I KNOW NOT WHENCE THOU CAME -- BUT I KNOW THOU ART *HARBINGER* OF SOME GREAT *WOE*.

SOME *EVIL* WHICH I MUST NOW *ADDRESS*...

FASCINATING! THIS MAN COULD BE THE *TWIN BROTHER* OF THE OTHER JASON BLOOD!

THEY EVEN SEEM TO BE IN THE --AH-- SAME LINE OF *WORK*.

I NEED YOUR HELP, SIR. I WAS SENT TO CONTACT YOU BY A... BEING KNOWN AS *ETRIGAN*.

ETRIGAN?!?

WHAT MANNER OF FOOLISH *JEST* IS THIS?

NO JEST, SIR. IT'S FAR TOO *COMPLICATED* TO EXPLAIN, BUT ETRIGAN AND I ARE... *ALLIES* IN ANOTHER TIME.

THOU CLAIMEST *KNOWLEDGE* OF MERLIN'S SERVANT DEMON...

...YET I POSSESS NO *MEMORY* OF THEE.

NEVERTHELESS, THOU ART NO *EVIL*. THY VALOR AND NOBILITY SHINETH LIKE *BEACONS*.

VERY WELL, STRANGER. I ACCEPT THE *TRUTH* OF THY WORDS, FOR THE NONCE.

THEN...YOU *CAN* HELP ME? I MEAN, *THOU CANST*...

COME -- THERE IS *MUCH* WE MUST ATTEND!

I *UNDERSTAND* THY STRANGE SPEECH, FRIEND, FEAR NOT. IN FACT, IT ADDS SOME *CREDENCE* TO THY STORY.

NOW, LOOK THEE HERE... INTO THE SWIRLING WATERS OF THE *POOL OF KNOWING*...

14

"POOL OF KNOWING"?

AYE... THESE WATERS FLOW OUT OF A STREAM STRUCK FROM THE VERY *LIVING ROCK* BY GREAT *MERLIN* HIMSELF.

IF THERE IS *SORCERY* AFOOT-- AND WHY ELSE WOULDST THOU HAVE DEALINGS WITH ETRIGAN--

--THE *PLACE*, AND PERHAPS THE VERY *NATURE* OF THE EVIL WILL REVEAL ITSELF... *THERE!*

'TIS A SMALL, BUT HIGHLY *CONCENTRATED*, NEXUS OF EVIL. SHIELDED, SO I MIGHT NOT HAVE NOTICED IT, BUT FOR THY COMING-- 'TIS ALSO TWO HUNDRED LEAGUES FROM HERE.*

'TWILL TAKE US *DAYS* TO REACH IT.

* ONE LEAGUE -- APPROXIMATELY 3 MILES

WELL, NOT NECESSARILY...

STRANGER, THOU DOST CONTINUE TO *ASTOUND* ME!

HOW DOST THOU *BREAK* THE MIGHTY *BONDS* OF EARTH? EXCEPT FOR THE SPELL WHICH BROUGHT THEE HERE, I SENSE IN THEE NO *MAGIC* WHATSOEVER!

IT'S... A LITTLE *DIFFICULT* TO EXPLAIN, MR. BLOOD.

I'M AFRAID YOU'LL HAVE TO *TRUST* ME.

AS THOU DOST WISH...

BUT, HOLD A WHILE. THE EVIL THAT WE SEEK IS CLOSE BELOW US!

HERE? ALL I SEE IS THAT RUN-DOWN *HOVEL*.

THERE'S NO ONE IN THERE BUT AN OLD MAN AND A LITTLE GIRL.

THINE EYES ARE *KEEN*, FRIEND. BUT THEY ARE MERELY *MORTAL* EYES. JASON BLOOD SEES *MORE*.

HEY!!

WORRY NOT, STRANGER...

CHANGE, CHANGE, O FORM OF MAN!

RELEASE THE MIGHT FROM FLESHY MIRE!

BOIL THE BLOOD IN HEART OF FIRE!

GONE, GONE, THE FORM OF MAN...

RISE THE DEMON...

ETRIGAN!!

16

AYE, WITCH! CRY OUT MY *NAME!* 'TWILL BE THE *LAST* WORD THY LIPS SHALL FORM!

EEEEK!!

THE DEMON! JASON BLOOD HIMSELF IS THE DEMON!!

ETRIGAN! *STOP!* SHE'S ONLY A *CHILD!*

CHILD?

SUCH *SHAPE* SHE WEARS...

...BUT *UNDERNEATH,* LIKE A *VIPER* HIDING IN A STRING OF PRETTY POSIES...

...SHE'S THE *MOST VILE OF ALL EVILS...*

MORGAINE LE FAY!!

THOU DOST *ASTOUND* ME, DEMON. I THOUGHT THIS PLACE WELL HIDDEN...

...EVEN FROM THE EYES OF SUCH AS THEE!

17

M-MY GRAND-DAUGHTER!! WHAT HAS *HAPPENED* TO HER??

WHEN THE *PLAGUE* TOOK HER, I THOUGHT MY HEART WOULD BREAK. BUT THE LORD HEARD MY PRAYERS, AND BROUGHT HER BACK TO ME!

THOU HAST BEEN CRUELLY *USED*, OLD FATHER.

LIKE MANY A *DEVIL*, MORGAINE LE FAY CAN *QUOTE* THE WORDS OF *SCRIPTURE* TO HER OWN ENDS.

AYE, ETRIGAN. THIS OLD FOOL'S FAITH IN THE *USURPER GOD* WAS USEFUL TO ME.

NOW...

...NEITHER THEE NOR THY STRANGELY GARBED COMPANION SHALL *DISRUPT* MY PLAN!

A STONE CAGE! LIKE UNTO *FORGED IRON!*

NOT E'EN MY *DEMON'S STRENGTH* CAN BREAK THROUGH SOMETHING WROUGHT BY MORGAINE'S MAGICKS!

NO, ETRIGAN.

THOU MAY HAVE FOILED ME IN THE *PAST*, BUT THIS TIME THE *PRIZE* IS *MINE*.!!

WITH THE PUNY SKILLS OF THIS OLD MORTAL, I WEAVE MY *MASTER SPELL*!

A SPELL TO LIE *ASLEEPING* TILL THE WORLD HAS GROWN BEYOND THIS *FILTH* AND CRAWLING *SLIME*!

18

THEN SHALL THE *CITADEL* OF MORGAINE LE FAY *CREATE* ITSELF!

THEN SHALL MY GLEAMING CITY APPEAR!

MY *PERFECT* CITY--*CAPITAL* OF MY FUTURE *KINGDOM!!*

NOW, OLD MAN, BACK TO WORK!! THY PART IN THIS IS NEARLY *DONE!*

A MOMENT MORE, AND THE PRECIOUS SPELL SHALL BE *UNBREAKABLE!*

WITCH! FOUL ENCHANTRESS!! THOU HAST *DECEIVED* ME! THOU HAST *BLASPHEMED* AGAINST MY *GOD!*

I'LL WORK FOR THEE *NO MORE!!*

NO?

CRETIN! THE WORD OF MORGAINE LE FAY IS *POWER ABSOLUTE!* THOU HAS NOT WIT NOR WAY TO *CHALLENGE* ME!

THOU HAST NO WILL, NO THOUGHT OR WISH SAVE MINE!!

:*UNGH!!*:

I... DON'T *GET* IT! IF THIS LE FAY WOMAN IS SO *POWERFUL*, WHY DOES SHE NEED THAT POOR OLD MAN?

THE SPELL SHE SEEKS TO WORK IS *COMPLEX* AND *UNREPEATABLE*, STRANGER. EVEN ONE SO SKILLED IN THE ANNALS OF THE *BLACK ARTS* AS SHE MUST USE A *HUMAN HAND* TO CRAFT THE PHYSICAL ASPECT...

...WHILE SHE IS LEFT TO CONCENTRATE HER UNMATCHED POWER INTO THE SHAPING OF THE MYSTIC FORCES. A MOMENT'S *LOSS* OF THAT CONCENTRATION, AND HER GREAT SCHEME WILL *FAIL!*

YOU MEAN... IF SOMETHING WERE TO *DISTURB* THE SPELL NOW, SHE WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO *RECREATE* IT?

THEN--THE *FUTURE* CAN BE *SAVED* IF WE ACT *NOW!!*

THY WHIRLING WORDS MEAN *NAUGHT* TO ME, FRIEND.

THE STRENGTH SHE PLACED WITHIN THIS STONE IS MORE THAN ETRIGAN CAN OVERCOME.

WHAT CAN BE *DONE?*

WELL, FOR ONE THING, WE CAN GET *OUT* OF THIS *BOX!*

NO!! THOU CANST NOT HAVE *ESCAPED!*

NO *FORCE* IN ALL THE WORLD COULD *BREAK* THE STONE I MADE!

WRONG, LE FAY.

YOU USED YOUR MAGIC TO *SHAPE* THE STONE, TO *CHANGE* IT...

...BUT THE STONE YOU CREATED WASN'T MAGIC *ITSELF* AND THAT ALLOWED ME TO *SHATTER* IT!

JUST LIKE I'M GOING TO *SHATTER* THIS LITTLE *GAME* OF YOURS BEFORE IT'S EVEN *STARTED!*

STRANGER, *BEWARE!*

TO BREAK THE SPELL, THOU MUST *DISRUPT* IT *PHYSICALLY!*

TO DO SO NOW COULD COST THY *LIFE!!*

I DON'T THINK SO, ETRIGAN! IN FACT, IF MY *GUESS* IS *RIGHT* AND THIS *WORKS*...

I'LL NEVER EVEN HAVE *BEEN HERE!!*

MISS MARK! SO GOOD TO SEE YOU!

IT HAS BEEN A WHILE!

YES, IT HAS. BUT NOT BECAUSE I PLANNED IT THAT WAY.

MR. JANKE, I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET A VERY GOOD FRIEND OF MINE, JASON BLOOD.

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THANK YOU, SIR. GLENDA HAS SPOKEN HIGHLY OF YOUR ESTABLISHMENT.

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LOOK! THERE'S SOME KIND OF CATCH ON THE SIDE. I DO BELIEVE IT...

CLIC

...OPENS...

OH...

WHAT A DISAPPOINTMENT!

IT'S EMPTY!

21

WELL--DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, GLENDA.

LOOK HERE--ISN'T *THIS* PIECE *JUST* WHAT YOU WERE LOOKING FOR?

OHH, YES! JASON, THAT'S *ABSOLUTELY* PERFECT FOR MY APARTMENT!

HOW MUCH IS IT, MR. JANKE?

FOR YOU, MISS MARK...

HEY! LOOK UP IN THE SKY!

IT'S *SUPERMAN!*

WHAT'S HE DOING IN GOTHAM, I WONDER?

JUST PASSING THROUGH, FROM THE LOOKS OF IT, RANDU.

AT LEAST, WHATEVER MIGHT HAVE BROUGHT HIM HERE...

IT SEEMS TO BE OF NO CONCERN TO JASON BLOOD...

...OR *THE DEMON!*

WHY SUPERMAN? WHY TODAY? by RAY BRADBURY

I have often been asked: Why do you write science fiction?

After I have exploded and ricocheted around the room nine or ten times, I respond:

There's nothing *else to write*!

If we are a science fiction people living in a science fiction environment in a science fiction time, are you going to write about cave dwellers, the invention of the wheel? Or a jousting bout the day Arthur's Round Table fell apart at the joints? Hardly. Or only insofar as all the above relate to the times, the incredible times we live in.

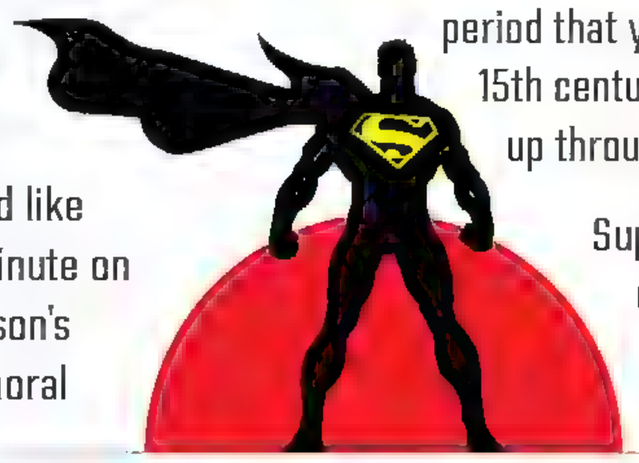
Which leads me to Superman and his history. He was not born, most of my lifetime ago, during the invention of the wheel, but you might say almost. For when you consider the primitive history of the late '30s, modern America was hardly wobbling around on its newborn robot feet. Television was a vague electronic fuzz drifting above a dozen of Earth's cities, waiting to be tuned. The sound barrier lay unshattered. The jet did not scream across the world; transatlantic clippers lifted only a few handfuls of tourists a day overseas. Most folks stayed home. Radio was the simple wax in the vox populi ear. Theatrical films were rarely "colorized." The widescreen cinema, invented, was not in use.

In the midst of these half-invented technologies, Superman falls from the sky. Why did we welcome him?

Because Superman is us and we are Superman. His problems may be larger than ours, and he may solve them easily, but we connect in the simple progression of dreams that become machines that change history. We are surrounded by technologies so familiar they are clichés, so we ignore them. The automobile is one of the biggest revolutions in history; a boon as much as it is a bust. Yet we ride amidst that revolution, watching it kill 150,000 people every four years. A major war, yes? And since we neglect the battle, there are times when Superman must remind us of the battalions and armies of vehicles that delight even as they destroy us.

Would I dare to offer some plotlines to Superman for the present and near future? It is tempting. For every time I pick up the newspaper or watch TV there is some new technology growing out of the earth or rushing across the sky, with scientists and lawyers watching or pursuing the same, trying to make Breaking-the-Sound-Barrier Law or Space Law (who owns the air around and above *what*?). How do we chart, map, and real-estate pie-cut the moon? Whose north-40 is Mars?

What about Jon-Erik Hexum, that young actor who accidentally shot himself with a blank cartridge, suffered brain damage, died, but whose heart now beats in the body of a young black man somewhere in the world? If the mother of that actor came to Superman the night before Christmas and said she would like to find that black man and visit him for one minute on Christmas Eve, to listen to the beating of her son's heart, would Superman help her find him? A moral dilemma, of course. Would the mother be able to survive such a sad encounter? How would the young black man feel, having this woman arrive to listen to his pulse on some snowing night?



Or—

There have been a dozen thousand articles in the past six years on genetic research. Scientists…playing in the gene-and-chromosome sandbox, have wondered if someday through DNA experiments they might be able to reconstruct Tyrannosaurus rex from the tiniest fragment of his flesh. Might a day come when future zoos could be filled with pterodactyls, stegosaurs, and the great brontosaurus? Would Superman visit such a zoo, run by a quasi-mad scientist? Or has he already done so, and I missed the issue with that adventure?

On and on it goes.

Last year a mother died, but her body was kept functioning for 63 days on life support. Why? So that her unborn child could finish out its term and be delivered forth; life issuing from death. An incredible event, which succeeded.

Superman, with us, runs in a lightning-and-thunder hailstorm of ideas that bombard us so furiously we haven't had time yet to judge the revolutions that are born overnight to change our lives forever. The computer revolution. The videocassette revolution. The Shuttle. Star Wars; American and Russian versions. The Apollo missions. Television itself, which has become so much a family member we hardly notice it sitting there, gabbling at the somnambulists.

Well, there you have it. Make your own list. Superman is the product of everything we were and are and have become since the Luddites ran into Scotch manufactories 175 years ago to beat up on machines that were taking away their jobs. Superman could not have existed sooner, or at least not completely, until all of our robot children came into full mechanical bloom. If he is the Man of Steel, then we are his steel compatriots, trying to figure out how in blazes to make do with yet another and another invention that careens into our world to knock us off the walls.

I suppose we like him because he does things we only wish we could do, or take too long in doing: solve problems. While we are busy turning off our TV sets because the technological climate viewed there is too puzzling, distracting, or confused, Superman takes off and goes to where the problem is. Between now and the start of the 21st century, it will be fascinating to see if we can come up with solutions on our own, without calling him in.

Meanwhile, a celebration. He has lived for 50 years in our imaginations. We, all of us, have survived an incredible 50-year period that yanked much of the world's population out of the 15th century into the 20th. With luck, we will stay and then fly up through the 21st, to live on the moon, Mars, and beyond.

Superman will go along. No. He will be *waiting* for us there.

RAY BRADBURY
1991

REINVENTING THE WHEEL

by MARV WOLFMAN

There is no doubt in my mind that Superman, created by Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster, is the greatest comic book character of all time. I know fans of other heroes might argue with that, but any of those characters, great as they are, take the back seat when compared to Superman, because, with the exception of surface changes, everything they are is owed to the one and original Man of Steel.

Superman was the first comic book superhero to wear a costume. The first to have a secret identity. The first to dedicate himself to stopping crime. The first to be misunderstood by the very people he was trying to help. The first to sell millions of copies every month. The first to have a movie, a radio show, a TV show, a Broadway musical, etc.

Every concept that has long since become a superhero cliché originated with Superman. Peter Parker wasn't the first nerd who was really a hero. Clark Kent was, and the early Lois Lane loathed his persona as much as Superman intrigued her. Batman wasn't the first to be hunted by the police. Superman was chased by the law during the very early years of his existence.

I became a Superman fan at age six when I first saw the original *Adventures of Superman* TV show. As a kid, I sent away to Kellogg's Sugar Frosted Flakes to get one of the Superman T-shirts they were selling. I bought every Superman family comic I could get my hands on and whatever merchandise I could find and afford.

I never thought I'd get a chance to work on Superman, much less participate in his redevelopment. But I did. Not only once, but twice.

I made my first sale to DC Comics in December of 1967 with an issue of *Blackhawk*. After that, I worked on *The Teen Titans*, *Showcase*, *House of Mystery*, and many other titles, but never got the chance to write the Big Enchilada himself. In 1972, after a short stint at Warren Magazines, I was lured to Marvel Comics by then-editor Roy Thomas. I spent eight years there, first heading up their black-and-white magazine department, then becoming editor-in-chief of their color comics. I also wrote for nearly every title they had, and created more than 70 characters, including such stalwarts as Blade, the Vampire Hunter; Bullseye; Black Cat; and the Man Called Nova. In December 1979, I returned to DC Comics where, after a few one-shots, I was assigned to the book of my dreams: *Superman*.

I was writing *Superman* and I was working with the great Curt Swan. Tell me I wasn't in seventh heaven. I dare you. Even though I had co-created *The New Teen Titans*, which was rapidly becoming DC's bestselling title, my private moments of joy came from knowing I was working on *Superman*. What could be better, I wondered? The answer came quickly. The legendary editor Julie Schwartz (everyone bow and intone, "We're not worthy. We're not worthy.") wanted to revamp the title and asked fellow Superman writer Cary Bates and me to come up with new versions of his archfoes, Lex Luthor and Brainiac.

I came back with two pitches. My Brainiac turned the human-looking machine into a dark, menacing living computer. I wanted to re-create him as something with so much power even Superman would be helpless before him. Visually, I saw the artist H.R. Giger, who had designed the creature in the film *Alien*, as the starting point for this new Brainiac. I worked with staff artist Ed Hannigan, who came up with an absolutely incredible design.

My Lex Luthor pitch was more groundbreaking. As a kid, I hated Luthor because every month Lex would star in some 8- or 12-page story where he would first have to break out of prison. He would invariably hatch a scheme that would come down to his building a 50-foot robot to rob some bank. Superman would stop him at the end of eight pages and send him back to prison.

Even as a kid I thought this was dumb. If I had the money to build a 50-foot robot, why would I need to rob a bank? Luthor had to spend more money on his robots and hideouts than any bank ever has on hand. I wondered why he didn't use his incredible scientific genius to legally make far more money than he could ever possibly steal. I thought Luthor should be a villain Superman could not defeat with his superpowers. Luthor's power was his brain, and he needed to outthink Superman, who was more used to punching his way through a mountain than calculating the square root of pi.

I reasoned if I were Luthor the best way to fight Superman was simply not to give him a target. Therefore, I would become a businessman and my business would be aboveboard and legal. Further, I would make Luthor Metropolis's number one citizen. His companies would employ half the city. His charitable deeds would make him famous. He would be the city's most beloved citizen. He would be charming and powerful and everybody would want to have their photo taken with him. Women would flock after him, but the one he'd be most interested in would be Lois Lane, reporter for the *Daily Planet*.

This would be his outward persona. But Luthor, like Superman, would have a secret identity. Hidden under so many layers that even X-ray vision couldn't see through them would be Luthor's criminal life. Money and fame wouldn't be enough. Living atop the highest mountain in Metropolis so he could look down upon the ants while they stared up to him wouldn't be enough. My new Luthor had to prove he could literally do anything he wanted with all the people who meant nothing to him.

Luthor would destroy anyone or anything in his way. He would commit despicable acts, and yet nobody would ever know he was responsible. This was the power he craved.

So, in my mind, Luthor had it all. By being the city's number one citizen, he had his fame and fortune, and he also gave in to his inner demons and ruled the city through fear. Luthor was a happy man indeed.

...until Superman came to Metropolis and became the new boy in town. This shining god who had no ulterior motives, no guile, and no desire to do anything but help others would quickly become the new focus for the city. Luthor had money and power, which is always cause for suspicions, but Superman was pure and somehow everyone knew it. If losing his fan base to this alien muscle-boy wasn't bad enough, there was one last knife in the back as far as Luthor was concerned: Superman's basic honesty won him Lois Lane.

Luthor instantly hated Superman. Luthor had wanted to be worshiped like a god, and this man took it all away from him.

That was my setup, but as much as Julie liked it, he felt that Cary and I should each be responsible for only one of the revamps, and he went with Cary's proposal. But I was pleased to have re-created Brainiac, and instead of sulking over the loss of Lex, I took my proposal and morphed my new Lex into another great DC villain, Vandal Savage. Vandal now had the corporation and the power and the secret criminal empire. I was fine, and the readers seemed to enjoy the changes Cary and I made.

But all things, good and bad, come to an end. After a lifetime in comics where he pretty much ushered in the entire Silver Age with his modern re-creations of the Flash, Green Lantern, Atom, Hawkman, and a slew of others, Julie Schwartz decided it was time to retire.

At this same time, I had just spent a year working on *Crisis on Infinite Earths*, where everything in the DC Universe was changing. DC decided to use this opportunity to completely revamp the Man of Steel from scratch. It was a great idea and long overdue.

Because others would be developing the Superman character in the other titles, I was asked about my place in the relaunch. I said first and foremost that I wanted to revive my Luthor concept. I warned if this was accepted my new Luthor would become so powerful he would literally take over all the titles. I typed out a new version of my original proposal and this time it was accepted. DC gave me a contract for the new Luthor, threw a bunch of bucks my way, and I was delighted.

I also wanted to do something even more earthshaking than merely changing the motivations of some follicly challenged villain. I wanted to come up with a female character who, dare I say it, liked Clark Kent. Not Superman. Clark. After all, Clark is certainly as handsome as Superman, even if he does shuffle and hunch over. He's obviously got a great body. He's also a top reporter, so despite his mild-mannered

persona, he had to be a go-getter. And, of course, Clark was, simply put, a nice man. So why *wouldn't* a woman want him?

I came up with Cat Grant, the *Planet*'s beautiful gossip columnist, and, because of the stunning artwork of Jerry Ordway, an incredibly sexy female at that, who focused right on Clark the first time she saw him. Where Lois originally saw a bumbling nerd, Cat Grant saw a tall, powerful, handsome ace reporter. I also gave Cat a strong backstory, which included a kid and a failed marriage, all the kinds of realistic touches that had not been seen in Superman since the early 1940s. Cat became so popular she was even included in the first season of the TV show *Lois & Clark*.

The decision was made to relaunch Superman with three different titles. There would be *Superman*, of course, and that would be renumbered starting with issue #1. There was *Action Comics*, and that would continue its numbering. And then there would be a third title that would assume the numbering of the original Superman title. That was the book I'd write. Since I started reading Superman because of the 1950s TV show *Adventures of Superman*, I proposed using that title. It was immediately approved.

The three titles were split up creatively as well as conceptually. *Superman* and *Action* would deal with the Big Stories—Superman fighting great super-villains; Metropolis in peril. The Luthor I created was used in those titles.

I was asked to do science fiction stories in my book, but I wanted to do smaller stories, more personal tales somewhat more realistic in nature, not unlike the Superman from the 1930s and early 1940s. This down-and-dirty Superman was the Superman I loved to read when I first had a chance to go through DC's library and pore over his earliest adventures. You can read those great tales in the DC Archives collections, available at better comic book shops everywhere. They are not only fun, but they set the pattern for all comic book superhero stories right to this day.

Jerry Ordway and I began work together on our Superman book and I couldn't have been happier. For our first issue, which, picking up the *Superman* numbering, was #424, I lobbied hard to do a new version of the *Superman* #12 cover from the 1940s. Jerry did a magnificent job, and that picture, showing Superman with an eagle on his shoulder, standing before the American flag—hidden in the color streaks of an evening sky—is one of the most beautiful Superman designs done in the last 50 years.

Working with Jerry, who brought a wonderfully realistic style to Superman, I created a number of other new characters, including Professor Emil Hamilton. I have to admit I thought Hamilton was just a simple throwaway, but somehow he caught on. Who knew? Hamilton has not only appeared in the comics, but in the *Lois & Clark* TV show as well as the hit show *Smallville*. He may have changed races (of course, so did Pete Ross), but there he was, front and center.

After my first year, because of a terribly long writer's block, I was no longer able to continue writing the title, so Jerry, who had been doing such a wonderful job illustrating my stories, took over the writing chores himself, and continued to produce great Superman stories for many years to come. I always wished I had been able to continue, but, as they say, the end of the script has yet to be written. The relaunch of Superman was designed to once again make the Man of Steel the great hero he deserves to be, and, in fact, the books sold through the roof.

Today, 66 years after his creation, Superman remains the greatest of all heroes. And as long as all the new writers and artists who continue to reshape him to fit the times remember the core of who Superman is and what he stands for, Truth, Justice, and the American Way will always be his unforgettable rallying cry.

Now it's your turn—the collection you hold in your hands features the first issues in our Superman revamp. I hope you'll enjoy the finished product that all the writers and artists worked so hard to produce.

MARV WOLFMAN
2003

THE ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN

by JERRY ORDWAY

The brainchild of writer Jerry Siegel and artist Joe Shuster, Superman is one of the most recognized icons of the modern world. Recently, while reading the newspaper, I happened upon a story about the former chairman of the New York Stock Exchange. The photo next to the headline showed the former chairman in his office, standing in front of a framed illustration of Superman.

"Truth, Justice, and the American Way" inspires us all.

As a child, my first exposure to Superman came from a grocery bag full of well-read early 1960s DC Comics given to us by a family friend. Later on, I noticed something called *The Adventures of Superman* on TV—old reruns, sandwiched between cartoons on Saturday mornings. Cool character, but it didn't change my life. If anything, Superman primed me for liking other superheroes, such as Batman. Upon discovering the "Marvelous" competition by age nine, I instantly relegated DC to the status of "kid stuff." As a devout "Marvelmaniac" I didn't give Superman comics much notice, the notable exception being Jack Kirby's issues of *Superman's Pal Jimmy Olsen*. Stan Lee's approach to superhero angst was my cup of tea.

In late 1978, I saw the Richard Donner-directed *Superman: The Movie* and that did it. The incredible life and emotion given to the mythos opened my eyes to the concept. Oddly enough, the Superman in the comics didn't reflect what I'd seen in the movie.

I started my comics career with DC Comics in 1980, and in those days, you had to prove yourself before being assigned to one of their top titles.

I spent six years doing that, but the offer to be part of the Superman relaunch was still intimidating. In the comic shops, sales had fallen, and more than one fan opined, "Superman is boring." I knew John Byrne could deliver an audience, and that DC would put a lot of marketing effort into selling it, but I wasn't sure I was the right guy to draw one of the titles, as my strongest inspiration came from the first movie and not the comics themselves. I guess I was kind of relieved to hear that my lack of Superman comics lore would not be a hindrance, as they were starting everything over from the ground up, according to editor Andy Helfer. John Byrne was resetting the continuity via his *Man of Steel* miniseries, to be followed by the three monthly Superman titles. I was teaming up with Marv Wolfman, the architect of the "Lex Luthor as Charles Foster Kane" angle, and our book would have a slightly darker edge than either *Action Comics* or the main *Superman* comic. I was really getting jazzed now.

Early on, I lobbied hard to incorporate Jack Kirby's Jimmy Olsen/Fourth World concepts into our book, including the Cadmus Project, the Guardian, Morgan Edge, etc., but was told no-go. "Too early," said Andy.

Mike Machlan, Al Vey, and I shared a studio in Milwaukee at that time, and Machlan was to be my inker on *Adventures*, so he and I often batted story ideas around. Taking our cue from what Marv and Andy had said about darker-edged stories, Mike and I put a lot of thought into how the Guardian could be a good counterpoint character to Superman, handling low-level street crime in Suicide Slum, while Superman fought the super-villains. Eventually, many of those ideas were implemented by revising and renaming the character Gangbuster.

Al Vey, Mike, and I "studio-plotted" the *Adventures of Superman* chapter of the "Superman on Apokolips" story line when Marv was unavailable. That became my first official co-plotting credit, although the plot was reworked by John Byrne before I put pencil to paper.

ARTBOMB

Studio-mates often pitched in to help each other out of deadline troubles. For instance, while Machlan moved on to other inking assignments after *Adventures of Superman* #424, he helped out by doing uncredited layouts for pages 10–14 and 17–18 on issue #427. And sometimes local artists like John Statema came through, by doing layouts for pages 16–22 on issue #429, as I was slowly drowning under the weight of deadlines.

I wasn't able to both pencil and ink a monthly comic in less than five weeks. I was a young guy, trying to prove myself worthy of being a Superman artist of the caliber of Curt Swan, who held the assignment for over 30 years. I was also competing with fellow artist John Byrne, who seemed to get all the fan press while writing and drawing *Superman* and *Action Comics*. I'm sure it was harder for Marv, who had already earned a high standing in the industry, to find himself working on "that other Superman book."

The key element of the "rebooted" Superman was that Clark Kent would be the real persona, and Superman the disguise he adopts to use his powers. Fans and pros still argue that that bit undermines the concept, but I disagree. Clark lives his life as an adopted child, and the Kents truly become his parents, imparting all the life lessons and values of a normal small-town kid. The knowledge that Clark is from Krypton does nothing to undo the life experiences that made him a Kent. That humanity is what makes this Superman meaningful to me. He's not like us, but in his heart he thinks he is. Again, the great warmth of *Superman: The Movie* is the bond that exists for Clark with the people he loves and the world that adopted him. That's the Superman I wanted to be part of.

The stories by Marv and me in this run stand apart from the more classic approach that John Byrne was using, and show how hard we worked to give *Adventures of Superman* its own personality. While our first story in this volume had Superman destroying a Middle Eastern despot's weapons of mass destruction, still relevant to today's world, the following two tales evoked the best elements of the George Reeves Superman TV show, and the magic of Christopher Reeve's performance as Clark Kent.

"Personal Best" puts Perry White's journalistic integrity on the line and shows the reader a Superman willing to intimidate bad guys in a way not seen since the early Siegel and Shuster stories. It was also packed with enough content to fill three issues of most current comics, but we did things like that then, as the three Superman books were not yet linked in a read-along fashion. In his plot, Marv called for a "big, tough guy" in the bar scene, and I modeled this guy on a great old man I knew as a kid—a dockworker who was a regular at our family's tavern—a guy who looked every bit like a live-action Popeye to me as a kid. I called him Jo-Jo. Mike Carlin, who had just joined on as Andy's colleague but hadn't quite taken the reins yet, renamed him Bibbo after a bit character in an old Jackie Gleason *The Honeymooners* episode. As with Professor Emil Hamilton, we later took these bit players and developed them into regulars when I began co-plotting the series with Byrne.

In "Old Ties" Marv supplied an interesting backstory for Cat Grant, and we got Clark Kent out of his suit and tie and into ski gear, on a romantic getaway with Cat Grant. Cat was now being modeled after inker John Beatty's sister Jane with her full blessing and photo reference. That helped make her more "real" to the reader, I think. Marv had introduced Cat into the Superman mythos to shake up the Lois Lane–Superman romantic angle. Cat was interested in Clark Kent, and not Superman. It gave us the opportunity to soften Lois Lane's hard edge by giving her twinges of jealousy.

It wouldn't be right to end this without focusing a bit on the other contributions to this volume. As a fan, I thought it was pretty cool at the time to see John Byrne tackle characters like the Green Lantern Corps and the Demon. His dynamic storytelling gave these established DC heroes a contemporary edge. *Action Comics* was my favorite for that reason. Dick Giordano brought a gritty approach to those inks, which suited the subject matter well. Inker Karl Kesel brought a smooth, polished look, well suited to the flagship title. Letterers John Costanza and Albert DeGuzman, along with colorist Tom Ziuko, contributed their talents as well. What a terrific time it was to work on Superman from the ground up!

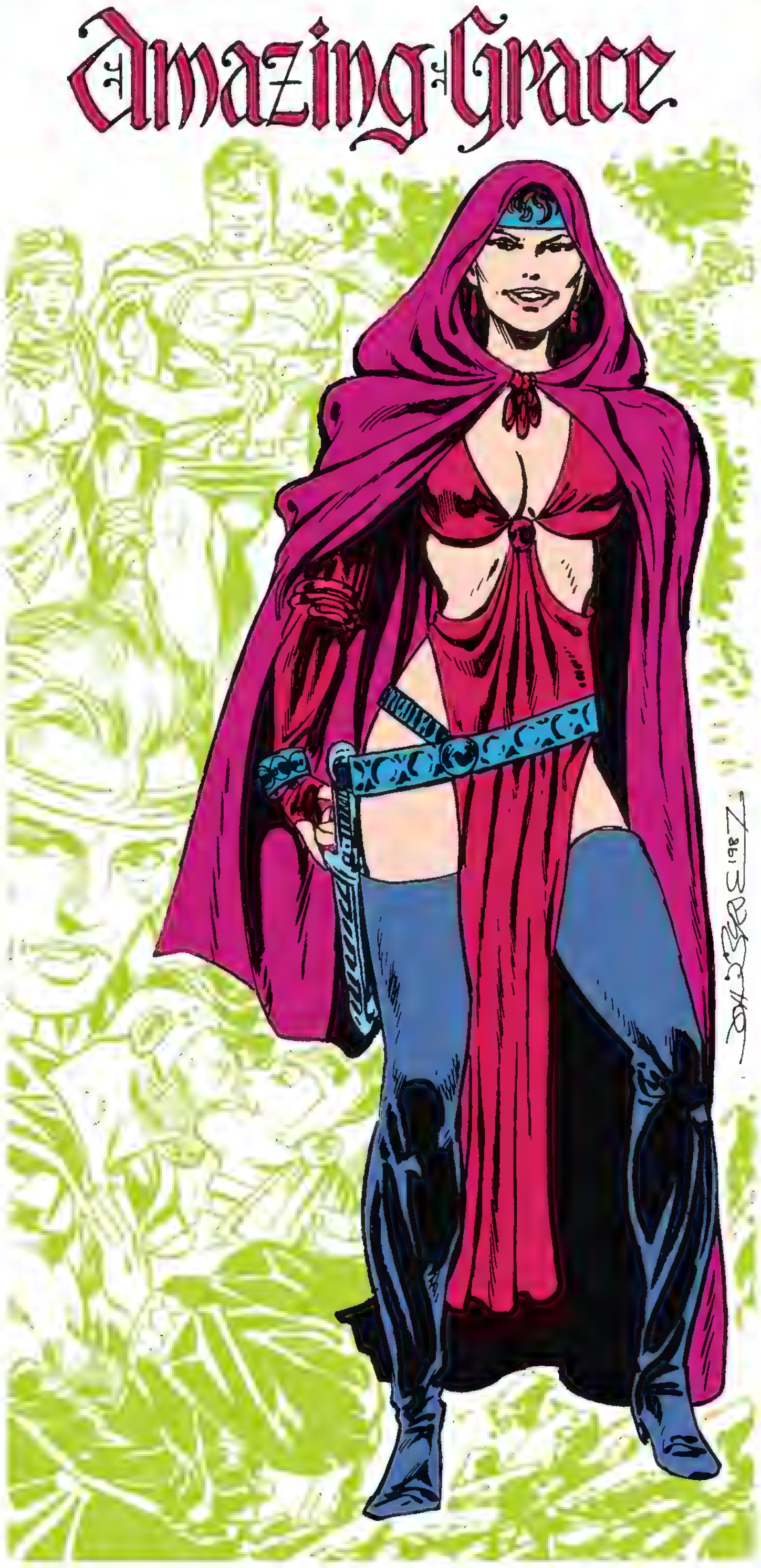
JERRY ORDWAY
2004

Superman: The Man of Steel Vol. 1 tpb cover
by JERRY ORDWAY

***Superman: The Man of Steel* Vol. 2** tpb cover
by **JERRY ORDWAY**

Superman: The Man of Steel Vol. 3 #66 cover
by JERRY ORDWAY

Amazing Grace



PERSONAL DATA

Alter Ego: None
Occupation: Agent of Darkseid
Marital Status: Presumed single
Known Relatives: Glorious Godfrey (brother)
Group Affiliation: Darkseid's Elite
Base of Operations: Apokolips
First Appearance: SUPERMAN (second series) #3
Height: 5'11" *Weight:* 127 lbs.
Eyes: Green *Hair:* Red

HISTORY

Like her brother Glorious Godfrey, Amazing Grace is a member of the elite serving Darkseid, the absolute ruler of the planet Apokolips (see *Apokolips, Darkseid, Glorious Godfrey*). Also, like Godfrey, Amazing Grace has the power to manipulate the minds of others. Hence, she can influence others to do or believe whatever she wishes.

Darkseid sent Amazing Grace to live among the oppressed workers of Apokolips who are known as the "lowlies" or "hunger dogs." Following Darkseid's instructions, Grace pretended to be a revolutionary and preached opposition to Darkseid's rule. Darkseid knew that many of the "hunger dogs" still hoped for freedom. His intention was to have Amazing Grace encourage their hopes and their will to resist, and then, at what Darkseid considered the proper time, he would have his forces crush the rebellion. Thus Darkseid hoped to extinguish the longing for freedom among the "lowlies" once and for all.

Darkseid's plans changed somewhat when he brought Superman (see *Superman II*) to Apokolips. Superman disguised himself as one of the "lowlies" of Armaghetto, an area of Apokolips. To lure him into the open, Darkseid had shock troops seize Grace and threaten to punish her for treason by hurling her into a fire-pit. Superman went to her rescue, but was himself plunged into one of the deadly fire-pits.

Superman was physically unharmed by the fire-pit and was fished out of it. On reviving, however, Superman lost his memory and his superhuman powers as well.

Amazing Grace told the "lowlies" that the fact that this stranger survived the fire-pit meant that he was the "savior" they had sought to lead their rebellion. Grace caused Superman to fall in love with her and suppressed his true personality. He was convinced he was Darkseid's son and persuaded to serve Darkseid's cause. Hence, Superman led the rebellion and then was pleased when Darkseid's para–demons crushed it. Darkseid subsequently restored Superman's powers but not his memory.

By then Darkseid's foes Orion and Lightray (see *Lightray, Orion*) had arrived. Grace attempted to put Lightray under her control but was thwarted when he used his powers to blind her temporarily. Superman regained his memory and true personality in an encounter with Orion. It is not yet known how Darkseid punished Amazing Grace for her failure with Lightray.

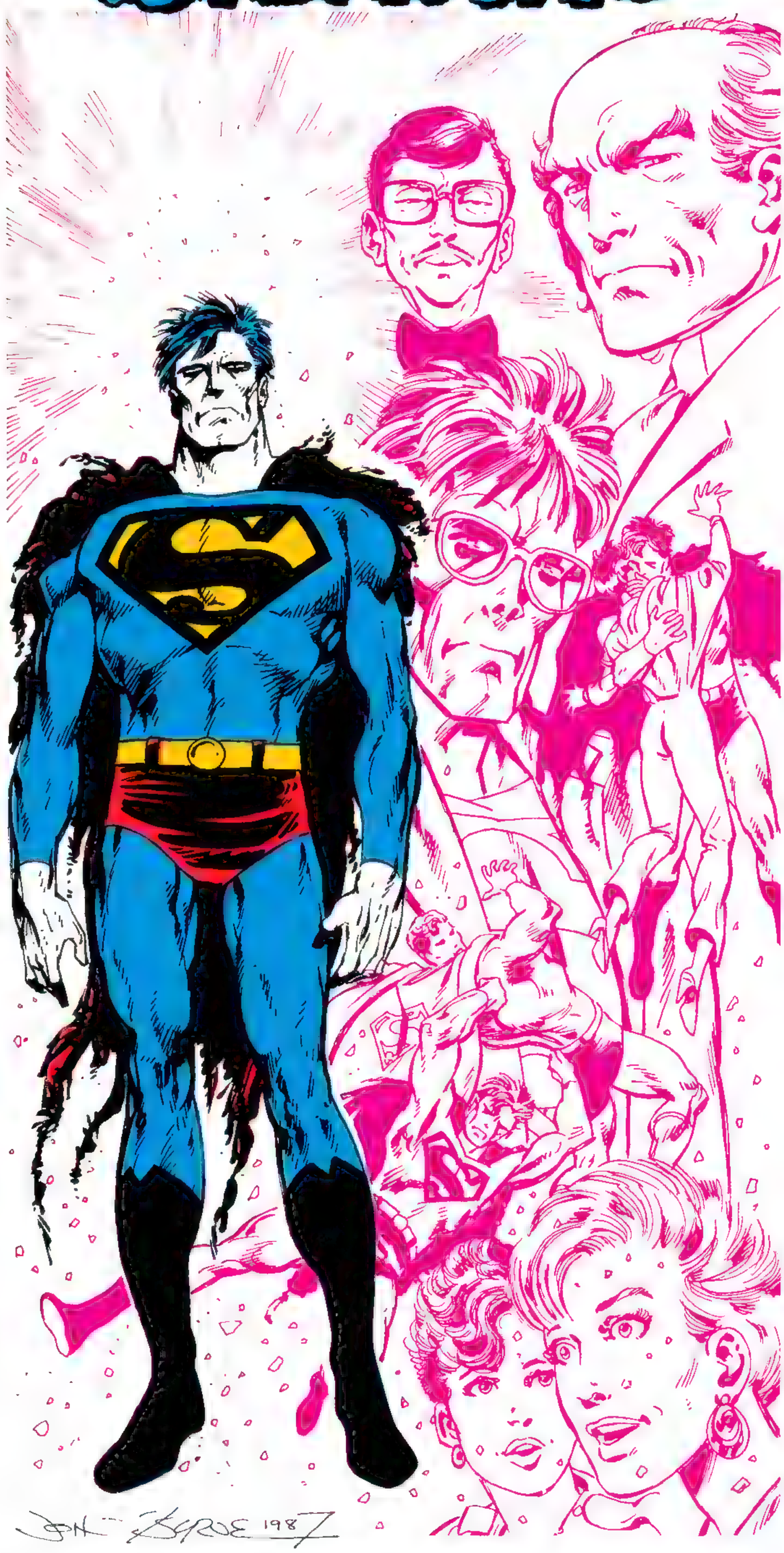
POWERS & WEAPONS

Amazing Grace has the power to manipulate the minds of others so as to influence them to do or believe what she wishes. Her powers are not as extensive as those of Glorious Godfrey. The origin of Grace's powers is unknown.

BIZARRO

PERSONAL DATA

Alter Ego: Clark Kent
Occupation: Would-be adventurer and reporter
Marital Status: Single
Known Relatives: None
Group Affiliation: None
Base of Operations: Metropolis
First Appearance: ACTION COMICS #254, (current version) MAN OF STEEL #5
Height: 6'3" *Weight:* 225 lbs.
Eyes: Blue *Hair:* Black



HISTORY

Billionaire Lex Luthor (see *Luthor*, revised) sought to create a duplicate of his archenemy Superman (see *Superman II*), who would possess all of Superman's powers and memories but would be subservient to Luthor himself. Luthor had engineered the escape of a scientist named Dr.Teng from the People's Republic of China. Teng worked for Luthor on "Project Changeling," in which Teng devised the "bio-matrix" mechanism, which could perfectly duplicate any known form of life.

While Superman confronted Luthor in the latter's Hong Kong office, Teng used sensor devices to scan Superman's entire cellular and molecular structure, and then fed the data into the bio-matrix. Soon, an android duplicate of Superman, created from inorganic matter (and hence not truly "alive"), emerged from the bio-matrix.

But Luthor and Teng had not realized until the sensors scanned Superman that Superman was an alien being, not native to Earth. As a result, the duplication process was faulty, and the android's body collapsed and began to crystallize. Disgusted by this failure, Luthor called the creature "bizarre" and ordered it destroyed. (Although the creature is called "Bizarro" in this entry, as far as is known, no one in the DC Universe itself ever gave it a name.)

However, the creature escaped, and, believing itself to be Superman, made its way to Metropolis. But the creature's ability to think was also defective, and it was incapable of speech. Soon after arriving in the city, the creature saved Lucy Lane, the younger sister of Superman's friend Lois Lane, from committing suicide (see *Lois Lane*). Lucy had recently gone blind and had fallen into despair.

Almost immediately afterwards, Superman himself confronted and battled the creature. Bringing Lois with him, the creature returned to Lucy, whose sight had partially returned after she was exposed to "dust" that came off the creature's body. Finally, Superman and the creature flew at each other at extraordinary speed. The resulting collision destroyed the creature, creating a shower of "dust" that fully cured Lucy's blindness. Superman speculated that the creature had sacrificed its own life to cure her.

Whether Dr. Teng's bio-matrix will ever be used to create another such creature remains to be seen.

POWERS & WEAPONS

Dr. Teng's imperfect android duplicate of Superman possessed all of Superman's powers, including super-strength, near-invulnerability, super-speed, the ability to fly, superhumanly acute sight and hearing, the power to generate heat ("heat vision") and the ability to see through objects ("X-ray vision").

Art by John Byrne

Revised

BLOODSPORT

PERSONAL DATA

Alter Ego: Robert DuBois
Occupation: Vigilante
Marital Status: Single
Known Relatives: Michael DuBois
Group Affiliation: None
Base of Operations: Metropolis

First Appearance: SUPERMAN (second series) #4
Height: 6'1" *Weight:* 231 lbs.
Eyes: Brown *Hair:* Black

HISTORY

During the years that America was waging war in Vietnam, Robert DuBois was drafted to serve in the United States armed forces.

But upon receiving his induction notice, DuBois fled to Canada, not because he was morally opposed to the war, but because he was afraid of death.

DuBois's younger brother Michael reported for induction in his place, passing himself off as Robert. Michael DuBois was sent into combat in Vietnam, where he lost both his arms and legs.

On learning that his brother had lost his limbs, Robert DuBois went insane from guilt. Robert spent years in and out of psychiatric hospitals in Canada. Robert became obsessed with the Vietnam war.

Robert was finally contacted by people in the employ of billionaire Lex Luthor (see *Luthor,* revised), who sought a pawn to assassinate Luthor's archenemy Superman (see *Superman II*). Operatives of Luthor, under the direction of a man named Kimberly, played upon DuBois's fixations on Vietnam in order to condition him psychologically to want to kill Superman. They also equipped DuBois with an arsenal of powerful, advanced weapons, including a gun that fired needles of Kryptonite, a substance that is lethal to Superman (see *Krypton and Kryptonite*).

DuBois then went into action in Metropolis, calling himself Bloodsport. He now claimed that both he and his brother had served in combat in Vietnam and had been injured there. Professing rage at the citizens of Metropolis for "wasting" the freedom he claimed he and his brother had fought to defend, Bloodsport indiscriminately slaughtered dozens of innocent people.

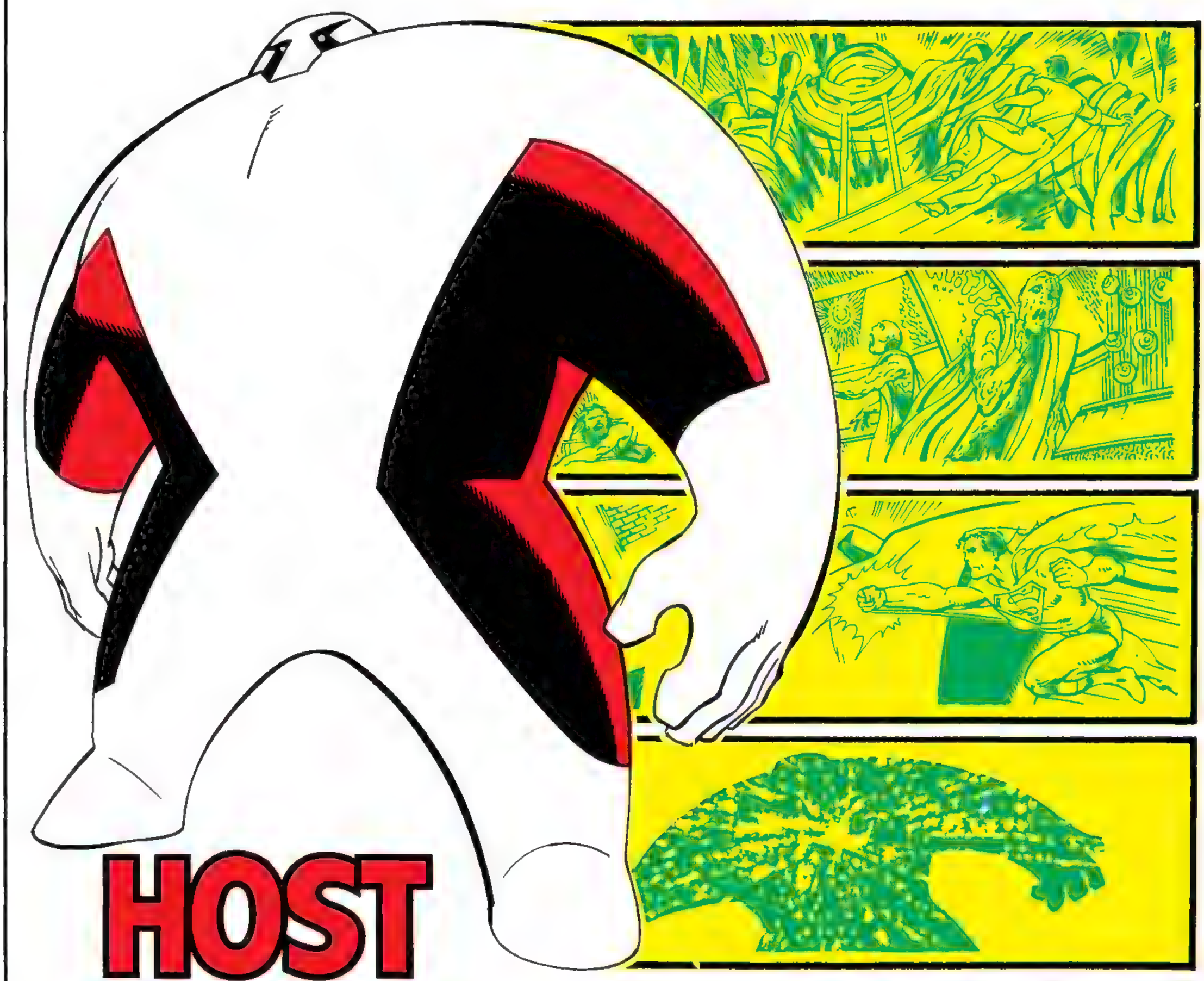
In his first clash with Superman, Bloodsport severely wounded him with a Kryptonite needle. After receiving medical aid, Superman confronted Bloodsport once more. Even Luthor, outraged by Bloodsport's murders of so many people, attempted to stop the mad killer. Superman succeeded in causing the teleportation device Bloodsport used to bring weapons to himself to malfunction. Bloodsport then threatened to detonate his teleporter's power pack, blowing up ten square miles of the city.

However, Superman's friend Jimmy Olsen had learned Bloodsport's true identity and located his brother. Confronted by Michael, Bloodsport collapsed in grief. Robert DuBois is now in custody.

POWERS & WEAPONS

Bloodsport, an average hand-to-hand combatant, wore a device that enabled him to teleport weapons to himself from an undisclosed location. His arsenal included bazookas, highly powerful advanced firearms, and a gun that could shoot needles made of Kryptonite.

Art by John Byrne



HISTORY

Five hundred thousand years ago, the city-state of *A'r'ven* stood in a mountainous region of what is now South America. A'r'ven was the home of the *H'v'ler'ni,* a race of beings who had created a highly advanced civilization while the rest of humanity remained at a primitive level. The origin of the H'v'ler'ni and the reason why they advanced culturally so much more quickly than Earth's other human beings are as yet unknown.

In at least some areas, H'v'ler'n science and technology was advanced beyond the levels that exist on Earth today. The Science Council, comprised of leading H'v'ler'n scientists, held great authority in A'r'ven. The H'v'ler'ni kept primitive human beings as slaves.

The H'v'ler'ni were remarkable for their superb physical condition. However, remaining in their city-state amidst the rarefied air of the Andes Mountains, the H'v'ler'ni were isolated from the rest of the world. This isolation would prove to be their downfall.

The H'v'ler'ni of A'r'ven thrived there for ten centuries, but then were suddenly struck by a terrible plague. Within ten days forty thousand H'v'ler'n died from the disease. During the past ten centuries the bodies of the H'v'ler'ni had been free of disease-carrying micro-organisms due to their city's isolation. But now, as the Science Council discovered, the H'v'ler'ni had been infected by germs carried by their primitive slaves. The slaves had an immunity to the germs, but the H'v'ler'ni did not. The H'v'ler'ni slaughtered all the slaves, but did so too late to safeguard the surviving H'v'ler'n as long as they lived on Earth.

Hence, the Science Council decided that the H'v'ler'ni should leave Earth to avoid further infection. Twenty million of the race did so, existing in suspended animation as they journeyed in a great spacecraft. The fate of these H'v'ler'n is as yet unknown.

But five hundred H'v'ler'n remained on Earth under the leadership of the H'v'ler'ni woman *A'x'iar.* They transferred their minds into a gigantic robot body, known as *Host*, which would monitor the cultural development of other humans. When the latter achieved a level of technology approaching that of the H'v'ler'ni, then the H'v'ler'ni minds inside Host would take over the bodies of living humans who were naturally immune to many disease germs. The H'v'ler'ni would then take over the world.

The Host robot was fifteen feet tall, had vast strength, and was nearly indestructible. It could fire laser beams from its eyes and fly using rocket engines in its feet. At some point natives wrapped the inert robot like a mummy.

Recently, Host was discovered by reporters Lois Lane and Clark Kent, who is secretly Superman (see *Lois Lane* revised, *Superman II*), and the archaeologist Dr. Estevez. A'x'iar's mind took over Lane's body, and nineteen other H'v'ler'n took over Estevez and his party. Superman battled Host, which forced A'x'iar's mind and the nineteen others to return inside it, since Host's power geometrically increases according to the number of minds it holds. To defeat Host, Superman pretended to be defeated. When the many minds inside Host each tried to take over Superman's body at once, Host suffered a massive short-circuit. Host was destroyed in the resulting explosion.

First Appearance: (Host) SUPERMAN (second series) #5, (H'v'ler'n) SUPERMAN (second series) #6

Art by John Byrne

LEX LUTHOR

PERSONAL DATA

Alter Ego: None
Occupation: President, chairman of the board, and principal stockholder of Lexcorp
Marital Status: Married many times, now divorced
Known Relatives: None
Group Affiliation: Lexcorp
Base of Operations: Metropolis
First Appearance: ACTION COMICS #23
Height: 5'10" *Weight:* 225 lbs.
Eyes: Green *Hair:* Red, now bald

HISTORY

Lex Luthor, the archenemy of Superman (see *Superman II*), is one of the world's two or three wealthiest men and is the head of one of its largest and most powerful corporations, Lexcorp. A genius as an industrialist, Luthor founded Lexcorp and guided its rise to its present size and power.

Lexcorp principally manufactures electronic devices of all sorts, but is also involved in many other areas of business and industry. Lexcorp has offices and operations throughout the non-Communist world, but its main offices are in Metropolis.

Due to his vast wealth and the great influence it gave him, Luthor was once known as the most powerful man in Metropolis. Lexcorp has part ownership of virtually every major business based in Metropolis. Although rumors persist that he engages in criminal activities, no wrongdoing on his part has ever been proved legally. Instead, Luthor is renowned as a philanthropist.

Luthor has long sought to add Lois Lane, a star reporter for Metropolis' newspaper *The Daily Planet,* to his list of romantic conquests, but she has steadfastly resisted (see *Daily Planet, Lois Lane* revised).

About a year and a half after Superman's public debut, Luthor held a party aboard his immense ship, the *Sea Queen.* During the party terrorists opposed to Lexcorp's South American activities attacked the ship. Warned in advance of a possible hijacking, Luthor had ordered his security force to hold back. Luthor hoped that Superman would intervene and that he could thus observe this new super-hero in action. Superman did indeed thwart the terrorists, but Metropolis' Mayor Frank Berkowitz, furious that Luthor had thus endangered innocent people, appointed Superman a special deputy on the spot and had him arrest Luthor. When Luthor objected that he himself was the most powerful man in Metropolis, Berkowitz replied, "No, you're not, Lex. Not anymore." In other words, Superman now was.

Luthor then suffered the humiliation of being jailed like an ordinary criminal. His lawyers saw to it he was not convicted, and Luthor vowed never to be arrested again. Determined to reassert himself as the most powerful man in Metropolis, Luthor confronted Superman and pledged to destroy him, but in such a way that although everyone would know Luthor was responsible, no one would be able to prove it.

Over the succeeding years Luthor has tried repeatedly to destroy Superman through various agents. So far Superman has survived but has been unable to prove Luthor's connection with the attacks.

POWERS & WEAPONS

Lex Luthor has no super-powers but is a genius at creating concepts for new inventions and products from Lexcorp. He leaves it to his employees to work out how to implement these ideas.

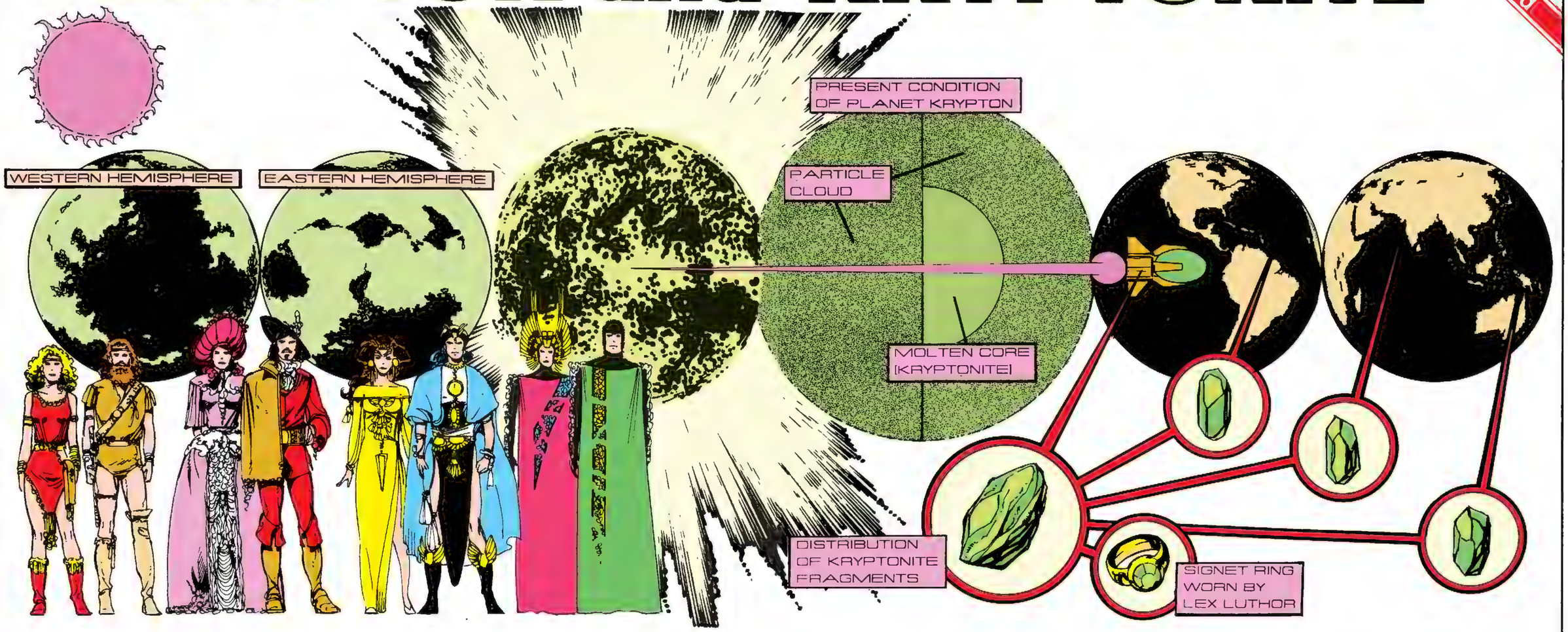
Luthor is a master at devising strategies for attacking Superman and has access to Lexcorp's advanced technology and weaponry. □

Revised

Art by John Byrne

KRYPTON and KRYPTONITE

Revised



HISTORY

Krypton was the native planet of Superman, Earth's greatest superhero (see *Superman II*). It was a world that was roughly the size of Earth and that orbited a red dwarf star that is approximately fifty light-years from Earth. Krypton presumably originated in the same way that planets normally do. (A previous account, alleging that Krypton was created by sentient beings called the Sun-Thrivers, is incorrect.) The origin of the humanoid race that inhabited Krypton is as yet unknown.

Well over a hundred thousand years ago, Kryptonian scientific achievement had already achieved a level surpassing that of present-day Earth's. The Kryptonians' perfection of cloning techniques wreaked a radical change in their society. Clones were grown from the cells of every living Kryptonian. Virtually any part of a Kryptonian's body that wore out from age, was severely injured, or became diseased could then be replaced with its counter-part from the clone. The clones were not allowed to develop thinking, conscious minds and were not recognized as sentient beings by Kryptonian law. The only part of the body that could not be replaced was the brain. However, Kryptonian science apparently also developed methods of preventing decay of the brain from age or senility, as well as means of retarding the aging process of the rest of the body. As a result, eventually no Kryptonian physically aged beyond the equivalent of forty Earth years, no matter what his or her true chronological age was, and death became nearly unknown.

Free from fears of injury, aging, or mortality, Kryptonians led lives that many might consider idyllic. Non-humanoid robots performed all mundane tasks, freeing the Kryptonians themselves for more stimulating forms of endeavor and providing them with leisure time. Thanks to Kryptonian science, Kryptonians had virtually perfect physiques. Their love of beauty and sensuality reflected itself in their fashions, architecture, and other forms of art. Science and art both made advances in new directions during this period. War was unknown. All of Krypton was governed by the Great Council, which met in Kandor, the planet's capital city.

But the advances in art and science merely served to provide new forms of pleasure to Kryptonians. The art they created no longer challenged their intellects or spirits. Scientists no longer delved into entirely new areas of study. In fact, Krypton's program for exploring outer space was eventually virtually abandoned. Kryptonian culture turned inward, for most Kryptonians were preoccupied with their own comfort. In effect, there was no truly major artistic or scientific breakthrough in Kryptonian society for thousands of years.

A large political faction in Kryptonian society demanded that the clones be allowed to develop thinking minds and personalities and to live normal lives, legally recognized as the equals of Kryptonians who were born, not cloned from cells. These political activists did not want body parts to be taken from the clones to replace those of Kryptonian citizens. A protest rally on the issue in Kandor led to a full-scale riot and fire there.

Then came the public revelation that a Kryptonian woman named Nyra had implanted modified RNA molecules from her own brain into a clone of herself, thereby giving the clone memories and a personality. Nyra had the clone's face surgically altered not to resemble her own and then passed the clone off as a normal Kryptonian citizen. The uproar over Nyra's action, which was illegal, led to war between the Clone Rights faction and the rest of Krypton.

As a result of the war, the Clone Banks were abolished and new methods were discovered for extending the youth and life spans of Kryptonians. Moreover, means were discovered and adopted throughout Krypton for giving birth to children without a physical relationship between the father and mother. Eventually, a system arose whereby a Kryptonian man and woman were selected to donate genetic material from their bodies. Cells from each would combine within a life-matrix device that was kept in the Kryptonian Gestation Chambers to form a new living being, which would grow within the matrix until it was finally released from it at birth.

This revolution in the method of procreation produced an even more radical change in Kryptonian society. For the last thousand years of Krypton's existence, Kryptonians were almost totally repressed sexually and emotionally. Kryptonian culture and society were emotionless, sterile, and spiritually dead.

Then, for reasons yet unknown, a chain reaction began building within Krypton, creating vast pressures that fused the principal elements making up the planet into a new, radioactive element now known as Kryptonite. Kryptonite radiation poisoning killed millions of Kryptonians. Moreover, the planet's internal pressures were causing earthquakes and building to the point of causing Krypton to explode.

Suspecting what was happening, the scientist Jor-El planned to equip his unborn son's protective life-matrix with an experimental star-drive unit and send him through hyperspace to the planet Earth. Jor-El was an unusual man for the society of his time, for he had fallen in love with Lara, the woman selected as the mother of his son. She and Jor-El shared another unusual emotion for that time, their parental love for the unborn infant.

In Lara's presence Jor-El launched his son's life-matrix to Earth just before Krypton exploded. The remains of Krypton, primarily consisting of Kryptonite, remain in orbit about Krypton's sun.

As Jor-El had theorized, a Kryptonian's cells, exposed to the radiation of a yellow sun, absorb solar energy, granting the Kryptonian superhuman powers. Possessed of such powers, Jor-El's son became Superman on Earth.

A piece of Kryptonite, about two pounds in weight, was embedded in the rocket that brought Superman to Earth by Krypton's explosion. This is the only specimen of Kryptonite on Earth. It was found by a scientist who used it to empower the cyborg Metallo, and is now in the possession of Lex Luthor, who has divided it into smaller pieces (see *Lex Luthor* revised, *Metallo* revised).

Kryptonite radiation will rapidly fill Superman's cells, driving the stored solar energy out, thereby reducing his superhuman powers. Sustained exposure to Kryptonite radiation over a brief period of time would kill Superman. Prolonged exposure over a greater time period would kill any living being. Kryptonite radiation's effect on Superman is not cumulative, and he will regain full health and strength on being separated from the radiation source. □

First Appearance: (Krypton) ACTION COMICS #1, first named in SUPERMAN (first series) #1, (Kryptonite) SUPERMAN (first series) #61

Lois Lane

PERSONAL DATA

Alter Ego: None
Occupation: Reporter, Columnist, Novelist
Marital Status: Single
Known Relatives: Samuel (father), Ella (mother), Lucy (sister)
Group Affiliation: None
Base of Operations: Metropolis
First Appearance: ACTION COMICS #1
Height: 5'6" *Weight:* 120 lbs.
Eyes: Blue *Hair:* Brown

HISTORY

Lois Lane is the daughter of Samuel Lane, who led a career in the U.S. Army. As a result, Lois grew up on army bases around the world. (Samuel Lane now lives in retirement with his wife, Ella.) Lois has only one known sibling, her younger sister Lucy, who is now an airline flight attendant.

Lois became a reporter for the *Daily Planet,* Metropolis' leading newspaper (see *Daily Planet*). She first reported on crime for the *Planet* and swiftly became the newspaper's star reporter. Lois Lane is now a feature reporter for the *Planet* with her own regular column. In addition, Lane is a successful mystery novelist writing in the Agatha Christie tradition. She won an Edgar award for her mystery novel *Shadows on the Grass.* She is well known to the public in Metropolis, in part due to her television appearances.

Lois Lane has long been romantically pursued by billionaire Lex Luthor (see *Lex Luthor* revised). However, Lane has continually resisted Luthor's advances, since she is unwilling to be added to his long list of sexual conquests.

Years ago, Lane was aboard the experimental space-plane *Constitution* when it was to land at Metropolis International Airport as part of the celebration of the city's 250th anniversary. However, a small civilian plane collided with the space-plane, causing them both to plunge uncontrollably from the sky. Both aircraft were rescued by Superman (wearing ordinary clothing) in his first public use of his superhuman powers (see *Superman*). Disembarking from the space-plane, Lane confronted Superman, and he and she were immediately attracted to one another. Superman soon flew off, and he adopted both his costume and his new bespectacled appearance for his true identity of Clark Kent shortly thereafter. He called his costumed identity "Superman," after the name Lane had given him in her newspaper story about him.

Lane was determined to get the "story of the century," the very first interview with Superman. After continually missing opportunities to contact him, she finally drove her car off a pier. As she had hoped, Superman rescued her (knowing she had an aqualung with her) and gave her an interview. But Lane then discovered that Clark Kent had already submitted an interview with Superman to the *Planet,* thereby winning a job there.

Lane has never forgiven Kent for scooping her on this story, and they have remained professional rivals. But they nonetheless spend much time together. She grudgingly finds herself attracted to Kent, unaware that he is Superman. Lane has been involved in many of Superman's adventures over the years. As for Superman, he is determined to win her love as Clark Kent, no matter how long it takes.

POWERS & WEAPONS

Lois Lane is a brilliant reporter, brave, sharp-witted, and persistent. She keeps herself in good athletic condition, and has taken a police course in self-defense. □

Revised

Art by John Byrne

PERSONAL DATA

Alter Ego: Margaret Pye
Occupation: Professional Criminal, former Museum Curator
Marital Status: Single
Known Relatives: None
Group Affiliation: None
Base of Operations: Gotham City Museum of Antiquities (derelict)
First Appearance: MAN OF STEEL #3
Height: 5'7" *Weight:* 120 lbs.
Eyes: Blue *Hair:* Black (as Margaret: Red)

HISTORY

As a little girl, Margaret Pye loved sparkly things and wanted them all for herself. Her friends ridiculed her for this obsession and gave her the nickname "Magpie."

This obsession just got stronger as Margaret grew up, so she became curator of the Gotham City Museum of Antiquities, where she could surround herself with the pretty things she loved. This love warped itself into jealousy, since she was constantly reminded of all the beautiful things she could never possess. Margaret's mind snapped, leading her to become Magpie.

As Magpie, she used the knowledge she'd gleaned from the museum to fashion deadly duplicates of the pretty things she wanted to own. She didn't see it as stealing; she was simply taking that which was rightfully hers and replacing it with a fatal reminder to the unlucky possessor that she was the true owner and they would have to be "punished" for keeping Magpie's shiny things from her. She surrounds herself with musclebound thugs who often pay the ultimate price for failure: they are "punished."

Magpie's first string of murders was stopped by Superman (see *Superman*) and Batman (see *Batman II* revised). After being released by a cagey lawyer, Magpie was stopped some time later by Batman and Robin (see *Robin III* revised). She is currently in custody.

POWERS & WEAPONS

Magpie has no natural super-powers. Her weapons, carried in her hip-pouch, include an exploding dart gun, poisonous acid gas pellets, and a wide variety of explosives and blades she uses to create her deadly duplicate gems. Her gloves contain spring-loaded needles coated with a paralysis venom.

She has also set many deathtraps into her base at the Gotham City Museum of Antiquities, most of which have been dismantled by Batman.

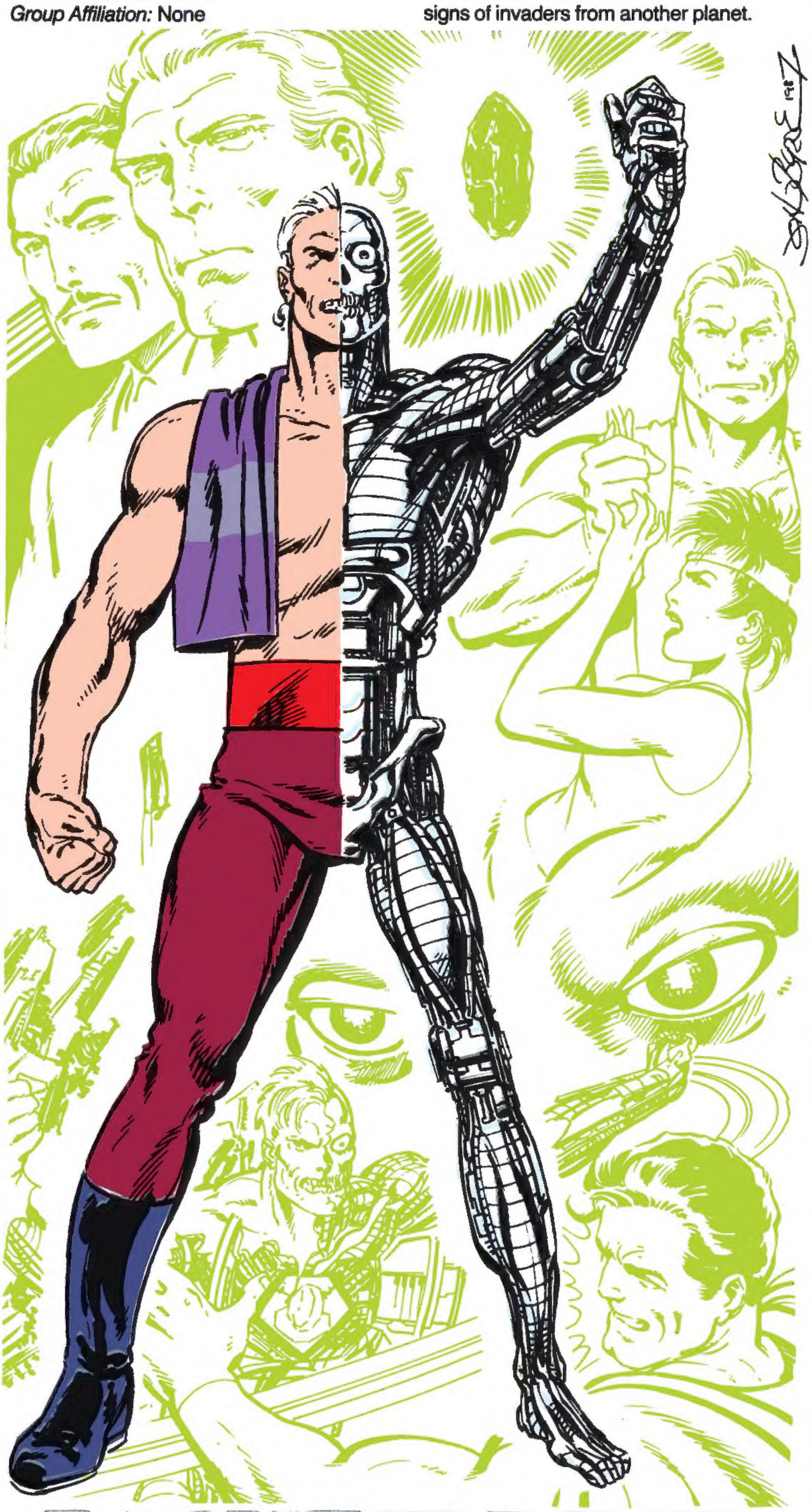
Art by John Byrne

PERSONAL DATA

Alter Ego: John Corben
Occupation: Former Confidence Man, later Would-Be Conqueror
Marital Status: Unknown
Known Relatives: None
Group Affiliation: None
Base of Operations: Metropolis
First Appearance: ACTION COMICS #252
Height: 6'5" *Weight:* 600 lbs.
Eyes: Green *Hair:* White

HISTORY

For thirty-five years Professor Emmett Vale, a scientist, watched the skies for signs of invaders from another planet.



Twenty-eight years ago, Vale sighted the spacecraft that brought Superman (see *Superman*) to Earth and tracked it to Kansas, where it landed. Vale eventually found the spacecraft and stole it. Translating part of a message that Superman's father, Jor-El, had left in the spacecraft, Vale learned of Krypton, the world on which Superman was born, and of its destruction (see *Krypton and Kryptonite* revised).

The paranoid Vale incorrectly hypothesized that the Kryptonians had sent Superman to Earth as a scout to prepare for the possible Kryptonian conquest of Earth. Vale believed, however, that he had found the means to destroy Superman, for a piece of Kryptonite, whose radiations are lethal to Kryptonians, had been embedded in the spacecraft.

Vale found John Corben, a criminal confidence man whose body had been crippled beyond repair in an automobile wreck. Vale transplanted Corben's living brain into a powerful robotic body which somehow drew energy from the uranium in its chest cavity. Vale renamed Corben Metallo and told him he was to kill Superman. To enable Metallo to do so, Vale replaced the uranium in Metallo's chest with the piece of Kryptonite. Believing he no longer needed Vale, Metallo broke the scientist's neck, killing him. Metallo wandered purposelessly for weeks until he finally decided to use his new power to achieve world domination. In order to do so, Metallo believed he first had to kill Superman.

Tracking down the stolen spacecraft, Superman eventually discovered Vale's corpse. Soon afterwards, Superman and Metallo met in combat. The radiation from Metallo's Kryptonite "heart" would have killed Superman had Metallo not been captured by agents of Superman's archenemy Lex Luthor (see *Lex Luthor* revised). Luthor saved Superman's life only because he was determined to bring about Superman's death himself.

While Metallo was helplessly held captive in one of Luthor's laboratories, Luthor removed the Kryptonite from his chest cavity, thereby deactivating Metallo. But whether this was truly the end of Metallo remains to be seen.

POWERS & WEAPONS

Metallo is a cyborg, whose living human brain exists within a robotic body, which has been made to look human by a plastic covering that resembles flesh. Although powerful firearms can wreak slight damage on Metallo's body, not even a collapsing building could destroy it. Metallo possesses great superhuman strength.

Metallo draws his energy from the radioactive material placed in his chest cavity. Kryptonite makes him far stronger than uranium does, and is a virtually inexhaustible power source for him. He can project Kryptonite radiation from his eyes. □

Art by John Byrne

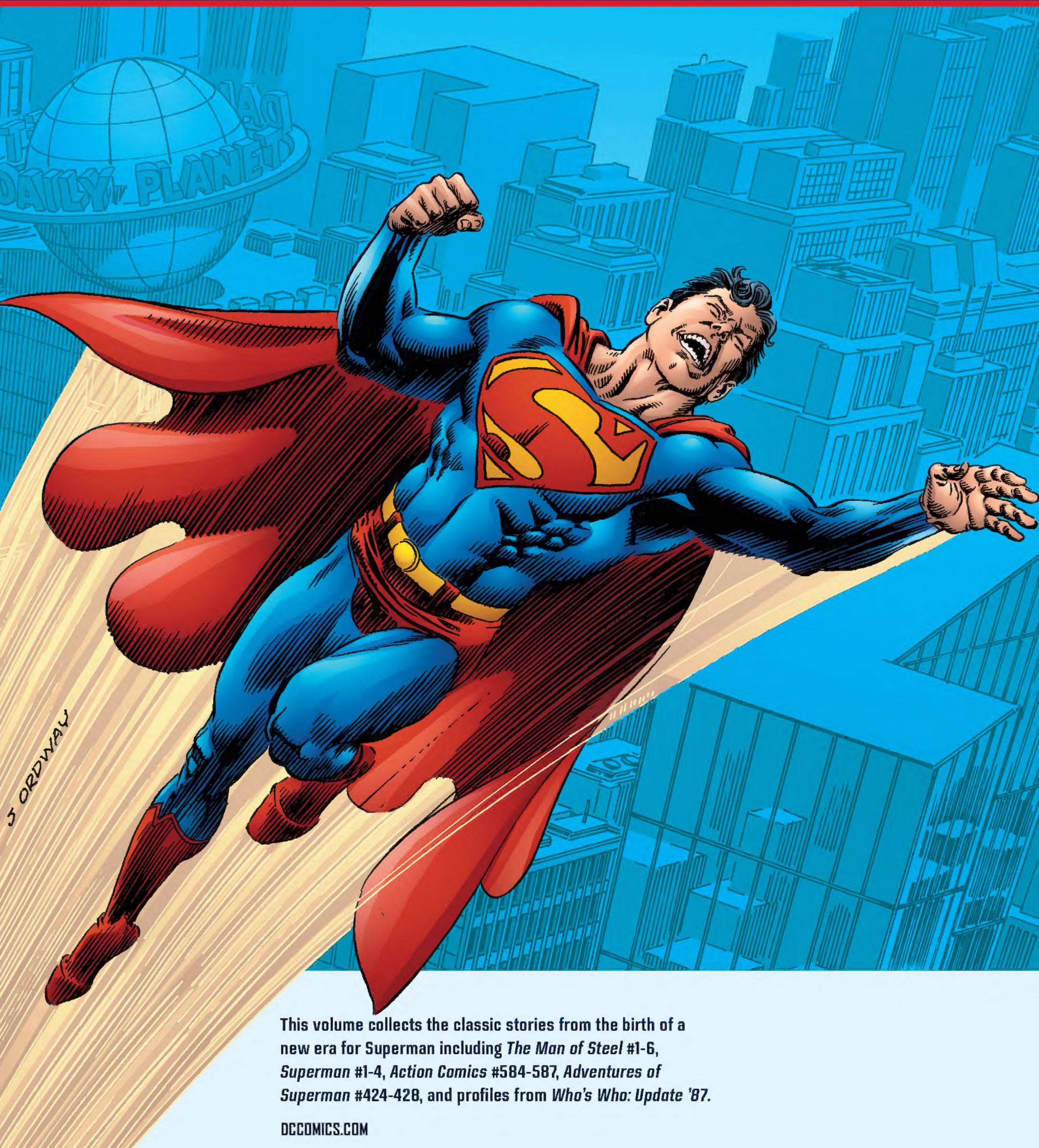
Revised

METALLO

THE NEW METROPOLIS!

In 1986, comics history was changed forever when DC Comics recruited the heralded John Byrne to reinvent Superman and the city he calls home. This relaunch reimagined the classic characters Lois Lane and Lex Luthor and introduced new characters Cat Grant and Dr. Emil Hamilton from prolific writer Marv Wolfman and artists Dick Giordano and Jerry Ordway.

The Man of Steel must protect his beloved home from Bizarro and Metallo's catastrophic attacks, all while keeping his civilian identity a secret from the most powerful man in Metropolis, Lex Luthor. While Superman is the city's new hero, Clark Kent is still learning how to navigate daily life, especially when he meets the brilliant and beautiful television journalist Cat Grant. Despite the constant chaos in Metropolis, Superman travels to Apokolips to confront the all-powerful villain Darkseid.



This volume collects the classic stories from the birth of a new era for Superman including *The Man of Steel* #1-6, *Superman* #1-4, *Action Comics* #584-587, *Adventures of Superman* #424-428, and profiles from *Who's Who: Update '87*.

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